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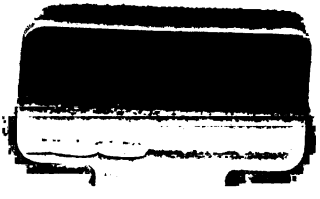

NAPOLEONIC STUDIES

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NAPOLEONIC STUDIES

BY

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LATE SCHOLAR OF CHRIST'S COLLEGE,
CAMBRIDGE

"Great events and great men are fixed points and summits of historical survey. From them we can consider it in its entirety, and follow it in its main lines."—GUIZOT.

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TO

MY MOTHER

WHOSE INTEREST IN HUMAN WELFARE, MAINTAINED
TO AN ADVANCED AGE, HAS EVER BEEN
AN INSPIRATION

205782

PREFACE

THE traveller whose way takes him through a vast forest is compelled by the needs of the case to press on to the outskirts, lest, perchance, night should overtake him amidst those tangled solitudes. He may here and there pause to glance down an attractive glade, but prudence forbids him to stray far from the main path. Very similar is the self-denying ordinance enjoined by common sense on those who essay to write the life of Napoleon. The task is so immense that wandering after side issues involves grave risk of failure to reach the goal. The historian may cast longing glances at many a subsidiary question, but his only chance of emerging from the mazes that beset him, from the time of the Paolist strifes in Corsica to the last intrigues at St. Helena, is to hold fast to the main clue.

While writing my "Life of Napoleon I.," I felt the pressure of this prudential constraint. Only at some points was I tempted to disobey its behests, namely, when some new materials came to hand that shed a new light on the story as a whole. In this respect fortune favoured me at many points. While searching amidst the almost unexplored records of the British Foreign Office records dealing with this period—themselves no small jungle—I found several documents

of great interest. Of some of these I made full use at the time, and embodied the information which they contained in the form of articles for Reviews. Others I was compelled to put on one side, promising myself, however, that at the first opportunity I would return to them. That opportunity has now arrived, and I venture to publish in this volume several earlier studies of the years 1893-1902, together with four other more recent essays which now for the first time see the light. These are "Wordsworth, Schiller, Fichte, and the Idealist Revolt against Napoleon;" "Pitt's Plans for the Settlement of Europe;" "Egypt during the first British Occupation (1802);" and "Austria and the Downfall of Napoleon."

As far as possible I have sought to place all these Essays in the chronological order of their chief topics or events. On looking at the range of subjects and episodes which here are treated, the reader, however familiar he may be with the outlines of Napoleon's life, can scarcely fail to be struck with the vastness and variety of the Emperor's gifts, and of the forces which he set in motion. Whatever we may think of the methods employed, or of the results attained, no one can deny that, as a world-forming influence, his powers were portentous. The miraculous element, however, disappears when we look into the records that reveal his untiring energy, and the 23,000 letters pulsating with virile strength. He took as the motto of his own life these splendid words written to his youngest brother Jerome nearly at the beginning of his naval career:

"Mourez jeune, j'y consens, mais non pas si vous viviez sans gloire, sans utilité pour la patrie, sans laisser

de trace de votre existence, car ce n'est pas avoir existé."

At some points I have been able to throw new light on these world-embracing activities. But the present Essays and Notes do not deal solely with Napoleon. In great part they treat of the strivings and aspirations of his opponents, and of the problems that resulted from the clash of the new national forces against the Emperor's power. The well-informed reader will not expect an exhaustive treatment of each subject. The limitations of space necessarily imposed by editors of Reviews will, I trust, be borne in mind.

My thanks are due to the following editors and publishers for permission to republish these Essays. As will be seen by reference to footnotes at the beginning of the Essays (excepting Nos. I, II, IV and X), I am indebted to Dr. G. W. Prothero and Mr. H. Newbolt, editors respectively of "The Quarterly Review" and "The Monthly Review," and to their publisher, Mr. John Murray; to Dr. R. L. Poole, editor of "The English Historical Review," and to his publishers, Messrs. Longmans and Co.; to Professors Tout and Tait of the Victoria University of Manchester, editors of "The Owens College Historical Essays," and to their publishers, Messrs. Longmans and Co.; also to the editor of "The International Quarterly" (U.S.A.), and to his publishers, Messrs. Fox, Duffield and Co., of New York, for permission to print here the Essay, "Austria and the Downfall of Napoleon," which is soon to appear in that Review. I may add that all the "Notes" in the second part of this volume are new, except "The Ice Incident at Austerlitz" and "Napoleon's Last Papers." As far as I can find out,

the letter of Nelson, printed at the beginning of Note I, has not been published before. I am deeply obliged to Miss F. Jarvis for permission to print the two new letters of Major Gorrequer from St. Helena.

J. H. R.

July, 1904

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NAPOLEONIC STUDIES

I

WORDSWORTH, SCHILLER, FICHTE, AND THE IDEALIST REVOLT AGAINST NAPOLEON

> And Freedom reared in that august sunrise
> Her beautiful bold brow
> * * * * *
> No sword
> Of wrath her right arm whirled,
> But one poor poet's scroll, and with *his* word
> She shook the world.—TENNYSON.

IN that mighty upheaval which we term the French Revolution there were, speaking broadly, two great social movements at work. The one was intellectual, the other material. The former aimed at completing the emancipation of the mind from out-worn traditions and cramping usages, the object of the latter was to better the condition of the over-burdened and underfed masses. The one took a wide survey of life, and sought, though in diverse ways, to broaden the outlook of all classes of men and of all peoples. The latter necessarily had to adapt its efforts to localities and classes, with their peculiarities and shortcomings, whence it speedily became narrow and warped, sometimes even selfish.

The two movements intermingled at countless points. In the work of the more intelligent leaders of men, like Mirabeau and Danton, whose outlook on the wider issues of life did not weaken their grip on facts, it is impossible to draw a sharp line between their efforts for intellectual liberty and their championship of the wretched. Both mental and material motives urged them onward, though on different paths and at different speeds. But no one who studies the Revolution at all critically can fail to be struck with the benumbing pressure exerted by material needs on the secondary leaders, above all, on the rank and file.

The untoward events which placed the National Assembly in the heart of Paris, among an excitable and often underfed populace, ensured the speedy triumph of what I have ventured to call the material over the intellectual side of the Revolution. The summer of 1793 saw that triumph completed, but the upshot of the struggle had long been evident. Throughout the greater part of the year 1792 every popular leader had been nervously anxious to keep the masses supplied with food at moderate prices and to accuse royalists and all other opponents of seeking to starve the people and drain France of her wealth. Young deputies who came up from the provinces full of the generous ideals of the earlier period of the Revolution soon had to reckon with the grinding pressure of facts in Paris. War with feudal Europe for the freedom of mankind —such was the cry on the lips of the Girondins in the spring of 1792. It availed them little when "assignats" were depreciated and the cost of living steadily rose. Their pathetic belief that the laws of supply and demand would provide the safest cure of the

existing dearth gave a handle to the unscrupulous men of the clubs, who won the hearts of the rabble by the Law of Maximum and similar measures, thereby ensuring the overthrow of the nominal leaders in the civil broils of June, 1793.

That month is a fatal time in the Revolution. Granted that the men of the clubs showed wonderful daring and endurance in the national war, yet they undoubtedly degraded the tone of French politics. Thenceforth little attention was given to schemes of national regeneration. The efforts of Condorcet and a few others after elementary Education advanced no further than the paper stage; the same is true of the attempt to codify the new laws; and France sank with scarcely a struggle under the mean rule of the Directory. Doubtless the warping influences of fierce party strifes and of an unexampled series of military triumphs counted for much in this downward trend; but the idealism of the French people would certainly before long have re-asserted itself had not revolutionary politics come to turn mainly on the satisfaction of material needs. When that was the case, when the doctrines of the Rights of Man came in practice to mean the right to enjoy a fair share of the spoils wrung from the privileged classes, the influence of the Revolution for good was clearly nearing its end.

In truth, that great movement, though set in motion by thinkers, was kept going by the men of the street and the men of the field. These, so long as they kept their new lands and were assured against the return of tithes, *gabelle*, *taille*, and other disagreeables or iniquities of the old *régime*, cared little for the higher aims of 1789. The extraordinary way in

which first the Directory and afterwards Bonaparte tampered with the constitution and curtailed freedom of thought and action, proves the completeness of the triumph which material interests had gained over the more generous programme of the early revolutionists. For those of them who survived, and retained their former faith, life was one long struggle—witness the careers of Lanjuinais, Carnot, and Mme. de Staël.

In this reaction from the ideal to the real, by far the greatest influence was that which emanated from the personality and achievements of Napoleon. No one can read the memoirs, newspapers and pamphlets of the autumn of 1795, and the autumn of 1796, without being struck by the change wrought by military glory upon a sensitive and excitable people. Since the times of Alexander and Caesar, no first campaign has ever dazzled the world like that of Bonaparte in Italy. But in later years he came to see that even military glory is not the most powerful of political forces. During the Empire he expressed to his Minister of the Interior, Chaptal, his sense of the overwhelming importance of satisfying the bodily needs of the populace.

"Napoleon has told me several times" (wrote Chaptal in his "Souvenirs"), "that he feared revolts of the populace when they were brought about by want of work, though he never feared political uprisings; for then one could shoot without pity, and with 1,200 men well led and four guns drive all Paris into its shops, as he had done on the 13 Vendémiaire [the day of the "whiff of grapeshot"]. . . . Napoleon feared the people. He dreaded insurrections, and it is this fear which constantly led him to false measures. His principle was that corn ought to be very cheap, because riots take place almost always from the dearness or scarcity of

bread. Therefore he allowed the exportation of corn only when farmers threatened to grow it no longer."

How well the Emperor had learnt the lesson of the fall of the Girondists is seen in his desperate measures to keep bread cheap, and to make work for the out-o'-works. Many other examples might be cited—*e.g.*, his refusal point-blank to the clerics at the time of the Concordat to restore tithes or do anything that might in any way unsettle the peasants on the confiscated lands. But it is needless to multiply proofs of what is notorious, namely, that he looked on the satisfaction of the creature comforts of peasants and artisans, including of course the guarantee of the agrarian settlement of the Revolution, as the foundation of his power. In that sense, as well as in regard to affairs of government, he was right in saying—"I am the Revolution." We may note in passing that of the three watchwords of the Revolution he accepted Equality in so far as it implied *la carrière ouverte aux talents*—under his control. He absolutely rejected Liberty, and denied that Frenchmen cared for it—as he well might. As for Fraternity, it was mere *idéalogie*.

But this claim to represent the Revolution never deceived the thinkers of France, who knew that that great movement had once aimed at something more than the *pot-au-feu* adage of Henri IV. The men who held to their opinions despite the skilful allurements of imperial patronage, and the steady pressure of the censorship, were not numerous. But they include some names which France will not willingly let die. Benjamin Constant and Mme. de Staël proved that French thought had not lost all strength and individuality.

Châteaubriand's conduct after the execution of the Duc d'Enghien shed a halo of dignity over the whole of his chequered career; and many of the orators of the Tribunate, along with a few pressmen, remained true to the ideals of Mirabeau and Camille Desmoulins. It might be of interest, did space permit, to follow the fortunes of Mme. de Staël, as M. Paul Gautier has recently done in a spirit decidedly favourable to the Emperor, and to prove that the gifted authoress had no small influence in helping on the movement against Napoleon's domination.[1]

On the whole, however, it will be more profitable to trace the beginnings of that revolt in lands where its workings are more clearly marked, and led to more definite results. These are England, Russia and Germany.

It is a tribute to the solidarity of thought throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that the influence of French and English writers should have been not only intimate, but even in some respects supplementary and corrective. The speculations on politics and society which accompanied and followed the English Revolution of 1688 spread to France after the lapse of a generation, there to germinate and fructify in a startling manner. The point of contact was the visit of Voltaire to England in 1726. The sober pleadings of Locke on behalf of constitutional rule, and the more strident claims of Bolingbroke for absolute freedom of thought, passed through the fiery nature of the versatile Frenchman, and came out in an almost revolutionary guise. All the arms which Voltaire turned

[1] "Mme. de Staël et Napoleon." Par M. Paul Gautier. Paris, 1903.

with such skill against the abuses of Church and State were supplied by English thinkers. The same may be said of Montesquieu's more measured protests against the wrongs of absolutism in France. Here again Mr. Churton Collins has lately shown[1] that thought was deeply tinged by his stay in England. Rousseau's debt to the islanders is less marked, but the author of "Le Contrat Social" clearly owed much of his matter to Hobbes and Locke, though, as in the case of Voltaire, the brilliance of the style and the stiff logicality of the arguments were essentially French. English thought then, in its Gallic setting, was confessedly one of the chief forces that moved France to its depths, and gave to the first phase of the Revolution its distinctive character.

The differences in the working out of very similar theories in the lives of the two peoples are at first sight bewildering; but they may readily be explained. The typical Englishman of the time of the first three Georges accepted their nominally constitutional rule as a compromise to be accepted with lukewarm thankfulness. Popular liberties were safe and the Church of England was safe. The Revolution of 1688 had done its work, and its intellectual champions were, in a sense, conservatives. Their teachings therefore aroused no curiosity. Locke was looked on as a prop of the Protestant Succession, and even Bolingbroke's deism caused only a passing flutter in polite society. After all, was it not allied to respectable Toryism?

Very different were the conditions of life in France

[1] "Quarterly Review," April, 1903. See, too, Mr. Collins's chapter on "Voltaire in England," in his work on Bolingbroke (London, 1885).

Though the intellectual seed was the same, the character of the sowers and of the seed-bed itself was vastly different. Voltaire and Rousseau flung themselves indignantly against the worst evils of the day; yet they effected no change, and they saw no prospect of change. Then, again, not only France but, with the exception of Switzerland, all the neighbouring lands were hotbeds of class and clerical privilege. Accordingly, the French reformers claimed for their teachings a universality to which the English thinkers never laid claim. Locke and others of his school had in view a special case in a land that differed widely from continental lands. As the need for Locke's constitutional teachings waned they were forgotten, save by the lettered few. In France the intellectual protest deepened and broadened with every year that saw the old sluice-gates feebly patched and closely shut. The result among so eager a people as the French was thenceforth almost inevitable; and the leaders of the revolt, forgetting in their ardour the limitations which Rousseau had imposed on the application of his perfect polity, set to work as if the new doctrines were about to cure all the evils of Humanity.

The results are well known, and need not detain us here. What we have to notice is the influence which the Gallicized thought of England had in its turn on English thought, and especially on Wordsworth.

It is, perhaps, hardly too much to say that the visits of Wordsworth to France during the Revolution stamped their mark on English literature as deeply as those of Voltaire and Montesquieu to England had done on the life of France. Wordsworth was twenty years of age when first he saw something of

the joy and hope aroused by the Revolution in its early and better days. When nearing the end of his course at Cambridge he spent a long vacation on the Continent, and chanced to land at Calais on the day of the Federation Festival of July 14th, 1790. That great civic union, at which Carlyle levelled brilliant but mis-spent satire, touched the heart of the young poet, who looked at it with the insight born of sympathy:

> There we saw,
> In a mean city and among a few,
> How bright a face is worn when joy of one
> Is joy for tens of millions.

With a keen eye for all that lifts up human nature above sordid care and petty selfishness, he noted the new gladness and graciousness that sprang from a sense of civic freedom and national regeneration.

> Among sequestered villages we walked
> And found benevolence and blessedness
> Spread like a fragrance everywhere.

In his tour down the Rhone he met a band of the *fédérés* returning homeward after the great festival at Paris; he gave and received a hearty welcome, joined them at meals, and danced hand-in-hand with them round the board. For the present, however, these were but surface impressions. The undergraduate had not yet worked his way to those deeper thoughts on life which give value to impressions by linking them with some informing truth. The sight of the calm simplicity of peasant life in Alpine valleys attracted him more than the exuberant life of French democracy could do; for as yet he saw not whither all this was tending. Not until his residence at Orleans, in 1792, did he catch a

glimpse of the higher aims of that struggling people. As soon as his eyes were opened, he left the polished circles, where political talk was banned as ungenteel, and became a "patriot."

> And my heart was all
> Given to the people, and my love was theirs.

The close friendship which he formed with the only reformer among the officers there in garrison, the taunts which his friend daily had to bear from his comrades, even the warmth of their royalist proselytism directed against the poet himself, served but to anchor him more firmly in republicanism. France herself was an inspiration. The sight of volunteers springing to arms to defend their newly won liberties, and of women bravely bearing the grief of parting, all told of life renewed and strengthened. Wordsworth always found his inspiration in the primal instincts that appeal to all mankind. Brought up amidst the sturdy Cumberland dalesmen, he early learnt to look on manhood as the true test of a people's well-being. Laws, politics, and institutions interested him only in so far as they made or marred men. Later on, at Cambridge, he found the life

> Of a Republic where all stood thus far
> Upon equal ground; that we were brothers all
> In honour, as in one community—
> Scholars and gentlemen.

But in the France of the year 1792 he saw a life fuller of promise for Humanity than the life of dalesmen or graduates could ever be. He beheld in vision all inhuman bonds and hindrances snapped asunder, and felt with prophetic sympathy the heart of France and

of every sister-nation throb with bounding vitality. Chancing one day to meet a famine-stricken girl tending a wretched heifer, his friend and he exclaimed that their fight must be against all that made for human misery.

> I with him believed
> That a benignant spirit was abroad
> Which might not be withstood, that poverty
> Abject as this would in a little time
> Be found no more, that we should see the earth
> Unthwarted in her wish to recompense
> The meek, the lowly, patient child of toil.
> * * * *
> And finally, as sum and crown of all,
> Should see the people having a strong hand
> In framing their own laws; whence better days
> To all mankind.

Cherishing these lofty hopes, the poet sought to enroll himself among the Girondin idealists whose luckless aim was to renovate Central Europe by a republican crusade; and but for a peremptory summons from his family to return to England, he would doubtless have shared their untimely fate. As it was, he mourned bitterly when England and France came to blows in 1793; he rejoiced at news of British defeats, and foretold victory for the Republic. For him the claims of British patriotism were as nothing in comparison with the building up of the manhood of the world. Despite the savagery of the Reign of Terror, he believed that the cause of France was that of Humanity. An individualist by nature and by upbringing among a stiff northern folk, he did not see the fatal weakness which the collectivist Mazzini afterwards probed.[1] He could

[1] "Essays of Mazzini," edited by Thomas Okey, pp. 179-225.

not understand that the struggle for individual rights among a community could scarcely fail to end in a selfish scramble, begetting, first, civil brawls inside France, and thereafter degrading the humanitarian crusade into a war of conquest. The swiftness of the transition distressed him; he saw only the external signs, and apparently he never traced back the evil to its source—the struggle for individual rights and the heedlessness of the claims of others which such a struggle begets.

> But now, become oppressors in their turn,
> Frenchmen had changed a war of self-defence
> For one of conquest, losing sight of all
> Which they had struggled for: up mounted now
> Openly in the eye of earth and heaven
> The scale of Liberty.

In his eyes the chief instrument in this work of degradation was Napoleon.

> When finally to close
> And seal up all the gains of France, a Pope
> Is summoned in to crown an Emperor—

This phrase, coming in the midst of a portentous but unfinished sentence, betrays the poet's agony of spirit as he looked back over the bloody struggles which promised to lead to a social millennium, and led only to a military empire. The foregoing extracts will have shown the inmost source of the poet's grief. He had hoped that France would rear a nobler race of men and women, self-respecting, considerate of others, the founders of a strong and stable commonwealth. And lo, she gave up the task as hopeless, abandoning Liberty as an idle dream, and accepting a taskmaster in order

that she might keep her own gains and lord it over her neighbours.

It is not surprising that, being but half aware of the facts, Wordsworth, like Beethoven, should have exaggerated her debasement, belittled her new ruler, and scoffed at the benefits of orderly government which he most assuredly brought to a distracted and disheartened people. Numbers IV. and XXII. of the "Sonnets dedicated to National Independence and Liberty," contain phrases that are clearly unjust. Bonaparte was far more than a military man, and none who knew him well ever accused him of being one of the "meanest of men." Possibly the heavy pressure of the First Consul on the democratic orators of the Tribunate in the years 1801-1803 may account for the bitterness of the sonnets indited by the poet in those years. He had known some of those men in their Girondin days, and accordingly hated the successful general who gagged the mouths of the earlier champions of Liberty. Wordsworth, however, was not moved mainly by personal feelings. He based his protest against the new tyranny on the strongest of all grounds, the right both of individuals and of nations to freedom. He grieved deeply for France, but he grieved far more for the sister nations on whom her hand now lay so heavily.

Grandest of all his sonnets is his dirge over the doom of Swiss liberty.

> Two Voices are there; one is of the sea,
> One of the mountains; each a mighty Voice.

We may note here that the poet himself at a later date placed it among the sonnets composed in the

month of September, 1802; but there are difficulties in the way of assigning it to that date. In that month the Swiss were overthrowing the government favoured by the First Consul, who for the time left them free to act as they chose. At that time, then, the Swiss were actually freer than they had been since the spring of 1798. Napoleon's withdrawal, however, was soon seen to be the device of *reculer pour mieux sauter*. Late in the following month the French troops returned, and the First Consul summoned representative men of Switzerland to Paris to receive the Act of Mediation, which was presented to them on February 19th, 1803. As the Swiss did not actively resist the French in the years 1802-1803, it is difficult to explain the following lines in the sonnet assigned to September, 1802,

> There came a Tyrant, and with holy glee
> Thou fought'st against him; but hast vainly striven
> Thou from thy Alpine holds at length art driven—

except as a reference to the events of 1798, when the French invaded the Forest Cantons, and beat down the resistance of the men and women of Stanz and the whole of Unterwalden. Seeing that the poet did not classify the sonnets till the year 1838, it seems fair to assume that he erred in including this one among others composed in September, 1802. Even if it belongs to this time, it must refer to the earlier period marked by desperate fighting among the mountains. In that case the "tyrant" would be, not Bonaparte, but Brune, though it is now known that the advice of the former contributed very largely to the despatch of that filibustering raid which helped to finance Bonaparte's Egyptian expedition.

No one, however, goes to poetry for facts; and though

it is regrettable that Wordsworth weakened his protest by mis-statements and exaggerations, yet the thought of the world would be poorer had he not lifted up his voice to declare that the building up of human character was of infinitely higher importance than military glory and romantic exploits. His chief fear was that the greed of wealth had so far weakened England's fibre as to leave her an easy prey to the conqueror. Hebrew prophets never pleaded more earnestly with their countrymen to arise and put on their strength than Wordsworth did at the close of the sonnet referred to above, and in that trumpet-call to noble action:

> Milton! thou should'st be living at this hour.

That the poet should have breathed his blessings on his native land, which a few years before he was ready to curse, shows how completely France had lost the proud place which, in the eyes of a poet and idealist, she had held but ten years before.

This goes far to explain the hatred which Wordsworth bore to Napoleon. The two men stood at the opposite poles of thought; the one was a thinker, imbued with the belief that by a life of simple toil, steadfast pursuit of duty and reverent study of Nature, mankind would be raised above many of the evils of modern life; while the other, after breaking away from the more generous aims of early youth, came to look on the human race as a *corpus vile* for the experiments of genius,—a thing to be dazzled by glory, duped by statecraft, and kept tethered at its crib. The one hoped to see the steady uplifting of the many by the permeating power of noble thoughts and by the influence of family life amidst quiet healthful surroundings; the

other believed only in external control, or failing that in an appeal to the fighting instincts and to self-love. Between such men there could be no truce.

Personal considerations may also have entered into the question. Few men have had the power of charming men and women more than Napoleon had. But in the days of his ascendency he rarely chose to exert it, and his conduct generally betrayed the wish to get the better of all whom he met, either by showing his own mental superiority or by probing their weakness. His brother, Joseph Bonaparte, explained this as the conscious effort of one not born in the purple to hold at a distance all his former associates and equals; and he claims that his brother had far more of real kindness than motives of state allowed him to show. However this may be, his usual behaviour during the Empire was certainly cold and repellent to a degree, and this together with the mathematical and calculating cast of his mind chilled the enthusiasm of nearly all the literary people of the day. Mme. de Staël is not an unbiassed witness; but her words will help to explain the curious fact that no great poet of that age—Béranger wrote later, after the Restoration—felt impelled to sing the deeds of the warrior. The passage deserves to be quoted in the original:

"Loin de me rassurer, en voyant Bonaparte plus souvent, il m'intimidait toujours davantage. Je sentais confusément qu'aucune émotion de cœur ne pouvait agir sur lui. Il regarde une créature humaine comme un fait ou comme une chose, mais non comme un semblable. Je sentais dans son âme une épée froide et tranchante, qui glâcait en blessant."[1]

[1] "Considérations sur la Rév. Franç.," ch. x.

The poetry of Coleridge might be cited as showing the same change of tone on French politics as that of Wordsworth. The close intercourse which the poets enjoyed during their residence at Nether Stowey in Somerset, in the years 1797-1798, strengthened in Coleridge that enthusiasm for French democracy which he had imbibed in his undergraduate days at Cambridge. At Bristol the young poet had planned, along with Southey and Lovell, a quaint scheme for the propagation of equality and extinction of selfishness by planting an ideal community on the banks of the euphonious Susquehanna. But that golden vision soon faded away under the chilly breath of poverty and conjugal discord. The manliness of Wordsworth supplied for the time all those elements in which the character of Coleridge was most lacking, and the months spent at Nether Stowey bore a priceless harvest of poesy—"The Lyrical Ballads" of Wordsworth, and "The Ancient Mariner," "Christabel," and "Kubla Khan," of Coleridge. While the friends were thus inaugurating the Romantic Movement in English Literature, there fell on them the news of the French invasion of Switzerland. The revulsion of feeling which it brought to Coleridge was swift and keen. He was less fitted to bear the shock than Wordsworth. In fact the sensitive ill-balanced nature of the younger man never quite got over the disappointment of finding that, so far from

> Conquering by her happiness alone
> Shall France compel the nations to be free—

that land was entering on the old paths of military aggrandizement and merited the scorn of every friend of liberty.

> O France that mockest Heaven, adulterous, blind,
> And patriot only in pernicious toils,
> Are these thy boasts, champion of human kind?[1]

As might be expected from these rhapsodic outbursts, Coleridge never quite regained his mental equilibrium, and, lacking the mental sturdiness of his friend Wordsworth, whose helpful companionship he was soon to lose, he thenceforth gave but little poetry to the world. While the blow drove the stronger nature to defiance of Napoleon and stirring calls to action against him, Coleridge, on the other hand, sank more and more into dreamland; and in his later poems, delicate and beautiful as some of them are, he obviously lost touch with the actual.

In the same way we might review the poetry of Southey, or, perhaps more profitably, cast a glance at the change that came over the opinions of those once ardent Bonapartists, Charles James Fox, Romilly, and the young Viscount Melbourne; but limits of space admit only of references to their writings,[2] and we now pass on to note the revulsion of feeling which Napoleon's actions caused in the most influential circles in Russia in the years 1801-1804.

In that land literature counted for little in the for-

[1] Coleridge: "France: an Ode." In some editions this is ascribed to the year 1797. Internal evidence shows that its closing stanzas cannot be earlier than the end of the year 1798.

[2] See Fox's conversation with Lord Holland in the summer of 1806 in the "Memorials" of the latter; also Romilly's disgust at the new despotism in France in 1802 and the character of Napoleon in his Diary kept at Paris ("Life of Sir S. Romilly," vol. i., pp. 415-423). Melbourne's change of opinion about Napoleon is described in "Memoirs of Lord Melbourne" by W. M. Torrens, ch. 2 *ad fin.*

mation of public opinion. Everything depended on the will of the Czar and the views of his chief advisers. But at the beginning of the reign of Alexander I. a new spirit came over Russian life. The young ruler proved to be a zealot in the cause of reform. In place of the far-reaching schemes of conquest of his predecessors, Catherine II. and Paul, projects of internal reform, comprising public education, and, in the future, emancipation of the serfs, filled the imperial mind. Foreign politics were for the time relegated to the second place; though the Czar promised himself that he would in due course turn his thoughts further afield and benefit Humanity at large. In cherishing these hopes he was undoubtedly sincere. His Liberalism was due primarily to his education by the Swiss democrat, Laharpe. It sprang out of the philosophic movement which had permeated the learned classes of all lands, producing the Encyclopaedists in France, the "Illuminati" in Germany, a Joseph II. in Austria, and, greatest marvel of all, a reforming Czar in Russia.

The reasons for the failure of Alexander's domestic schemes cannot be detailed here. What concerns us is the gradual change from the Gallophil sentiments of the early part of his reign to hostility and war with Napoleon. At first his relations to the British Government were less friendly than to their great opponent, as might have been expected from his decidedly French education and his natural leaning towards an enlightened autocracy such as Bonaparte seemed to be founding in France. The course of events, however, helped to cool his admiration for the First Consul. Though Russia and France were both of them mediating in German affairs at the time of the Secularizations in

1802-1803, yet the passivity of the Czar's Government and the skill and activity of Bonaparte and Talleyrand reduced Muscovite influence to zero. This loss of prestige deeply wounded Alexander's vanity, and the First Consul's masterful interference in the affairs of Holland, Switzerland and Piedmont completed his disgust and turned him from his former policy of easy toleration. At the close of the year 1803 the Chancellor, Alexander Worontzoff, withdrew from active official duties, whereupon the Czar intrusted the direction of foreign affairs to his intimate friend, Prince Czartoryski.

This young man, sprung from one of the greatest of Polish houses, early conceived the hope of restoring the fortunes of his afflicted people, and now took office on the understanding that he might at some future date plead their cause with his imperial master. Clearly that cause could not prosper if Russia concerned herself solely with domestic reforms. The Polish question was nothing if not international; it concerned Prussia (then mistress of Warsaw and the lands north thereof) and Austria almost as much as Russia. The private notes which the young statesman jotted down as to a desirable grouping of the European States show that he hoped in the future to recover from Austria and Prussia all their Polish lands, giving them compensations in the west and south-west for these losses. In the following Essay I have set forth my reasons for not taking the details of this scheme too seriously; but obviously any forward Russo-Polish policy was certain to conflict ultimately with the eastern extension of French influence which Napoleon was rapidly pushing on in time of peace. The Polish patriot saw that in the weak and kaleidoscopic States of Central Europe Russia

would find no very serious opposition. The foe to be feared was Napoleon.

Evidently the first step towards the attainment of these hopes was to give a forward trend to Russian policy. Czartoryski found little difficulty in playing on Alexander's nature, both on its worthier and its weaker sides. In brief, he appealed to his love for Humanity, and he touched his vanity. He showed how Russia's quiescence had recently enabled Napoleon to ride roughshod over her interests, and he pointed out the field of noble enterprise offered by the championship of downtrodden peoples in Europe. "I would have wished Alexander" (so he wrote in his Memoirs[1]) "to become a sort of arbiter of peace for the civilized world, to be the protector of the weak and the oppressed, and that his reign should inaugurate a new era of justice and right in European politics." The Czar entered into these aims with the ardour of a generous but somewhat ill-balanced nature; and thus Russian policy speedily took on a novel complexion.

It is worthy of note that the party of "the young men" who were high in favour with the Czar, the Worontzoffs, Strogonoffs, Novosiltzoff, and Czartoryski, instinctively leaned towards England. Simon Worontzoff (the younger) had long been ambassador at London, and his feelings are thus described by Czartoryski: "England had quite fascinated him; he loved her more than the most bigoted of Tories, and he adored Pitt to such an extent that he looked upon the slightest criticism or even doubt as to his policy and doctrines as simple nonsense and as showing an in-

[1] Czartoryski Memoirs, ii., p. 9 (Eng. edit.).

excusable perversion of mind and heart."[1] Czartoryski had no such predilection; but he both hated and feared Napoleon for his undisguised self-seeking. "It was impossible" (he wrote) "to take a prominent part in European affairs, to come forward as a judicial and moderating influence, to prevent violence, injustice, and aggression, without coming into contact with France at every step. She would have been a dangerous rival if she had wished to play the same beneficent part; but being led by the unlimited ambition of Napoleon, she sought to do the very contrary of what we wished. A collision sooner or later was inevitable."[2] The greatness of the loss suffered by France when, amidst the smoke of war, she lost sight of the generous aims of the Girondins, and drifted away under the control of the Directory, thereafter sinking beneath the colossal egotism of Napoleon, has never been more suggestively stated. The passage gains in force when we remember that it was penned by a patriot who during his ministry sought to pave the way for the restoration of Poland. From first to last the Polish idealist utterly distrusted the great Corsican.

As will be shown in the next Essay, the aims of the Russian and British Governments proved to be in complete accord on Continental affairs. The Russian State papers published in the Czartoryski Memoirs show that the repugnance caused in Russia by Napoleon's usurpations, and lastly by his execution of the Duc d'Enghien, completely ended the Franco-Russian friendship of the years 1801-1802. Czartoryski resigned office in June, 1806; other events weakened the Anglo-Russian alliance and helped to bring about Alex-

[1] Czartoryski Memoirs, i., p. 288. [2] *Ibid.*, ii., p. 12.

ander's abrupt change of front at Tilsit a year later; but it is well known that the new policy of compliance with Napoleon was greatly disliked by the nobles and merchants of Russia. One and all they showed their horror of Savary, the "executioner of the Duc d'Enghien," whom Napoleon very tactlessly sent on a mission to St. Petersburg, and that envoy significantly confessed that the Czar and his new Foreign Minister were the only partisans of the French connection.[1] Whatever public opinion there was in Russia remained obstinately hostile to Napoleon—a fact which enables us to understand the stubborn resistance to the conqueror even when he was encamped at Moscow.

It was in Germany, however, that the tide of popular feeling set in most strongly against Napoleon. There, as in England, the change had a striking influence on literature; and it is at this side of German life that we propose to look.

At the time of Napoleon's advent to power German literature was in a singular position. Freytag in a striking passage has shown how its brilliance increased with every year that saw the deepening degradation of the Fatherland. Placing the great events of the political and literary worlds side by side, we have this curious contrast:

[1] "L'Empereur [Alexandre] et son Ministre, le Comte de Romiantsof, sont les seuls vrais amis de la France en Russie; c'est une vérité qu'il serait dangereux de taire. La nation serait tout prête à reprendre les armes et à faire de nouveaux sacrifices pour une guerre contre nous." (Quoted by M. Vandal, "Napoléon et Alexandre I.," vol. i., p. 175, note.) So, too, Löwenstern wrote of the war of 1812: "Tout Russe bien pensant la désirait" (Löwenstern, "Mémoires," ii. p. 177. Paris, 1903.)

"Belgium annexed by France—'Hermann und Dorothea.' Switzerland and the Papal States overrun by the French—'Wallenstein.' The Left Bank of the Rhine annexed to France—'The Natural Daughter,' and 'The Maid of Orleans.' Occupation of Hanover by the French—'The Bride of Messina.' Napoleon proclaimed Emperor—'Wilhelm Tell.'"[1]

In truth, German literature of the years 1797-1803 had every claim to excellence but one. In the spheres of philosophy, the drama, and of lyric and narrative verse, it excelled that of France as the literature of the Greeks outdistanced that of their proud conquerors. But it had one fatal defect. Up to the time of the appearance of Schiller's "Wilhelm Tell" in 1804 it had no hold on life. The singers of Weimar serenely sang their lays, heedless whether the earth trembled and the fabric of the Holy Roman Empire rocked to its foundations. In a well-known passage of "Faust," Goethe jested at the weakness of that venerable ruin, and many a passage in contemporary German writings breathed a lofty scorn of all men who troubled much about the fortunes of their country. In a word, German thought of that period was unpatriotic. Its distinctive tone was that of the Illuminati, who, disgusted by the pettiness of German life amidst the narrow bounds of feudal domains, and inspired by the golden vistas that the Encyclopaedists opened up, hailed the French Revolution and even the absorption of German lands by France as a giant step forward towards the millennium. An example of this feeling is given by the Swabian poet Schubart; amidst the excitement of 1789 he wrote thus of

[1] Freytag, "Bilder aus der Vergangenheit," iv., p. 358.

the annexation of German fiefs in Alsace: "To become French in this way is the greatest triumph that any German, who dreams of being free, can conceive, while behind him cracks the whip of the despot." Not a single protest came from any influential German writer when France annexed the lands west of the Rhine.

Even two of the literary men who afterwards lifted up their voices against Napoleon's usurpations looked on with indifference at the early inroads of the revolutionists into Germany. Neither Schiller nor Fichte spoke a word to rouse their countrymen to resistance. In truth, at that time they looked on patriotism as an infantile complaint to which individuals and peoples were no longer liable in their ripened manhood. Early in 1791 Schiller, then Professor of History at Jena, wrote in this slighting way of patriotism, as a motive that could arouse little interest in history.

"This is the problem; to choose and arrange your materials so that, to interest, they shall not need the aid of decoration. We moderns have a source of interest at our disposal, which no Greek or Roman was acquainted with, and which the patriotic interest does not nearly equal. This last, in general, is chiefly of importance for unripe nations, for the youth of the world. But we may excite a very different sort of interest if we represent each remarkable occurrence that happened to men as of importance to man. It is a poor and little aim to write for one nation; a philosophic spirit cannot tolerate such limits, cannot bound its views to a form of human nature so arbitrary, fluctuating, accidental. The most powerful nation is but a fragment; and thinking minds will not grow warm on its account, except in so far as this nation

and its fortunes have been influential on the progress of the species."

The adjectives "arbitrary, fluctuating, accidental,' fitly describe the German States of that period, and indeed up to the close of the "Secularizations" in 1803. Who could grow warm about a political kaleidoscope?

In Schiller's early poems also we catch no glimpse of German patriotism. His "Robbers" (1780), is not unlike Shelley's "Queen Mab," in its defiance of all law; and the young medical student promised at first to be a kind of chief of a socialistic Cave of Adullam somewhere in the mountains of Germany. Rousseau was the fountain-head of this wild nature-cult in Schiller, as in so many other young men of the age. In a word, German thought took its tone from the speculative philosophy of France, adding a touch of romance all its own, but acknowledging no claims of kin and country.

The same cosmopolitanism also characterizes the earlier works of Fichte. The philosopher, who was finally to meet death while working on behalf of his country, had not many years before flouted the claims of patriotism. In a series of lectures entitled "Characteristics of the Present Age" (1804), he sought to persuade his hearers to fix their gaze on a larger and grander entity than their native land. The Christian peoples of Europe, he said, were in reality but one people; all intelligent men and women ought to recognize their common Europe as the one true Fatherland; and its component States ought to seek peaceful victories by developing their several resources and

furthering the prosperity of their neighbours. At the close of Lecture XIV. he asked:

"What then is the Fatherland of the truly cultured Christian European? Speaking broadly, it is Europe as a whole, and, in particular, that State which in any age stands at the summit of culture. That State which makes a fatal mistake will naturally fall. But precisely because it falls, as fall it must, others will rise, and among them one pre-eminently, and this now takes the place held by the former. The earth-born souls, who recognize their Fatherland in soil, river and mountain, may, it is true, still remain citizens of the fallen State. They keep what they desired, and what amply satisfies them. The soul which is akin to the sun (*der sonnen-verwandte Geist*) will irresistibly turn to the source of light and right. And in this cosmopolitanism we may entirely console ourselves for the fortune and fate of States, both we and our descendants, to the end of Time." [1]

Such was the teaching of Fichte two years before the disaster of Jena. Even before that blow fell, the encroachments of Napoleon and his execution of the bookseller Palm had dissolved the philosopher's castle in the air and made him a Prussian patriot. He did not desert his country in her hour of need, albeit the cringing subservience of Prussia to Napoleon had forfeited her the respect of high-minded Germans. There was enough earth in Fichte's being to make him cling to his native soil, and speak to Prussia's defenders words of encouragement.[2] Indeed it is noteworthy that scarcely a single Teuton of note migrated

[1] Fichte, "Sämmtliche Werke," vol. vii., Lecture XIV., pp. 204 *et seq.* (Berlin, edition of 1846).

[2] *Ibid.*, vol. vii., pp. 509 *et seq.*

to Paris, notwithstanding the temptations held out by the French Emperor to Goethe, Wieland and others.

The glamour of Napoleon's glory dazzled some literary men; and, to his shame, Goethe bowed low before the conqueror and organizer who promised to open to Germans of the Rhenish Confederation a life of profitable activity. Perhaps the lowest depth of servility was reached by Johann von Müller, the historian of Switzerland, who succumbed to the fascination of Napoleon in an interview at Berlin, and received a lucrative post in Jerome Bonaparte's Kingdom of Westphalia. At a state function, Müller broke forth into a panegyric of Napoleon—"before whom the earth is silent, God having given the whole world into his hands, nor can Germany now have a wish ungratified, Napoleon having reorganized her to be the nursery of European civilization."[1]

When cosmopolitanism led to such debasement as this, it is not surprising that men of spirit fell back on patriotism of the old militant kind. Schiller had been the first to herald the change. In his last work, "Wilhelm Tell," he undoubtedly strove to kindle love of country in all German hearts. The events of the Reign of Terror had filled him with distrust of the French. Then came the supremacy of Napoleon; and, as the French Emperor's power loomed ever larger over the Rhenish lands, while their natural protectors, Austria and Prussia, lay helpless or indifferent, Schiller chose as his theme a soul-stirring Teutonic legend.

The story of Tell is so handled as to touch every

[1] H. A. L. Fisher, "Napoleonic Statesmanship: Germany," p. 235. (London, 1903.) W. Menzel, "History of Germany," vol. iii., p. 262. (Bohn edition.)

German who saw the play. Natural right, pride in the deeds of worthy sires, and love of hearth and home, in fact, all the strongest of human feelings, are set vibrating on behalf of the Teutonic mountaineers who unite to beat off the insolent usurper. The long speech, in which Stauffacher recounts the first coming of the forefathers of the three *Urcantonen*, emphasizes the fact that these Switzers are Germans, who hewed their way from the far north by their swords, and built the towns of Schwyz, Stanz and Altdorf. The exactions of the Hapsburgs and their minions, above all the foul dishonour offered to Baumgarten's wife, bring together once more the long-sundered cantons, Schwyz, Uri and Unterwalden. High up on the Rütli rock, over the Lake of Lucerne, the mountaineers meet and strike once more the ancient compact for mutual help.

> No new alliance do we now contract,
> But one our fathers framed in ancient times
> We purpose to renew. For know, confederates,
> Though mountain ridge and lake divide our bounds,
> And every canton's ruled by its own laws,
> Yet are we but one race, born of one blood
> And all are children of one common home.

These words of Stauffacher, and indeed the whole of the scene of the oath-taking, are a rousing plea for the forgetting of past schisms, and for close union in face of a common foe. The priest, who had at first bidden kinsmen submit to the new usurping claims, proposes the oath as the dawn begins to glimmer in the East.

> By this fair light which greeteth us, before
> Those other nations that, beneath us far,

In noisome cities pent, draw painful breath,
Swear we the oath of our confederacy!
We swear to be a nation of true brothers
Never to part in danger or in death.
[*They repeat his words with three fingers raised.*
We swear we will be free as were our sires,
And sooner die than live in slavery.
[*All repeat as before.*
We swear to put our trust in God Most High,
And not to quail before the might of men.
[*All repeat as before, and embrace each other.*[1]

In the year 1804 the inner meaning of the play must have been clear to all Germans who saw it. The scene of the drama was laid in the very cantons which had stoutly resisted the French invaders in the unprincipled invasion of 1798. This fact alone would point the moral as to the duty of patriots at the crisis then existing, when French intrigues were sapping the Germanic System at its base. The barefaced manner in which Bonaparte and Talleyrand disposed of German church lands during the "Secularizations" of 1802-1803, and the paltry truckling of the constituted guardians of German interests, Austria and Prussia, all showed the urgent need of casting to the winds the selfish particularism of the past and of forming a new and stronger union. This plea was emphasized by two events in the spring and autumn of the year 1804, when French soldiers crossed the Rhine to kidnap the Duc d'Enghien and ventured to seize the British ambassador at Hamburg. Had Schiller lived but two years longer, we can imagine how he would have thrilled Germany with

[1] Translated by Sir Theodore Martin. Bohn edition, pp. 487, 494.

indignation at the cold-blooded murder of the Nürnberg bookseller, Palm.

Even so, however, "Wilhelm Tell" and his other works were an imperishable inspiration. The poet implicitly bade his countrymen put their trust, not in princes, but in the deep-rooted instincts of the common people. Like Wordsworth, he retained enough faith in the aims of the men of 1789 and the best teachings of Rousseau, to see in them the last bulwark of freedom against the onset of the autocrat who had so successfully travestied them in France.

Schiller's poems helped to clear the way for Fichte's proclamation of the rights of Nationality. As we have seen, the threat of war with Napoleon speedily dispelled Fichte's beautiful dream of a European Fatherland, and brought home to him the fact that there was a German Fatherland, of which for the time Prussia was the champion. The disasters and humiliation that followed, the pitiless exactions of the French troops, and worst of all, perhaps, the insults of the conqueror to the beloved Queen Louisa, inspired the philosopher with a longing to lift up his downcast countrymen; and, not many weeks after the signature of the Peace of Tilsit (July, 1807), when the Czar deserted Prussia and left her writhing under the feet of the victor, the thinker stood forth, and within sound of the drums of the French garrison of Berlin, spoke forth "The Addresses to the German Nation."[1]

In periods which are often wordy, stilted and rambling, but now and again launch forth thoughts of great force and beauty, the seer took up the burden of

[1] Fichte, "Sämmtliche Werke," vol. vii., pp. 264, *et seq.*

Germany. The woe of the land was due to selfishness. It had been an age of giant greed, but now self-seeking had run its course, and the outcome was ruin. Attention to the interests of parts having been fatal to the life of the whole, it remained to restore Germany. She could only be raised by breathing into her people some noble ideal. How could this be done? Clearly it must be done by a new system of education. The old education had been in every sense narrow and faulty; for in the first place, it had only been for the privileged few; and, secondly, even those few had not been lastingly benefited; they had not followed the better path of duty and self-sacrifice, but only the impulses of their own natural selfishness. Whereas an enlightened system of education would inspire its pupils with ideals of action so lofty that cold selfishness would melt as snow before the sun. This forms the subject of the first three addresses. At their close he caught a vision of the enlightened and ennobled Germany of the future. The sight aroused in him the fervour of an ancient seer, and he broke forth into the words of that sublime utterance of Ezekiel where the prophet commanded the winds to breathe upon the dead bones that they might live.

Fichte then enters into rather tiresome disquisitions on the essential characteristics of the German race, and its many differences from those of half German blood; but at length he comes once more to open ground on the subject of the achievements of Germans throughout their long history. Like many a patriotic thinker, he cheers himself and his hearers amidst present humiliations with the thought of what their fathers had dared and done in days long gone by. Arminius and

many other heroes, among them the sturdy burghers of the Free Cities, are referred to as showing the fund of strength always at hand in the German people, and only waiting to be aroused by some worthy motive.

The eighth "Address" attempts answers to the questions, "What is a people, and what is patriotism?" The former inquiry, conducted in a highly ideal manner, leads to the following description. A people is "the totality of persons living in social intercourse and constantly producing itself out of itself in a spiritual and natural manner, and that stands collectively under a certain special law of the development of the divine out of it." This quaint description—it cannot be called a definition—is of interest from its very vagueness. The idea of nationality was almost unknown to Germans. At any rate, it had never received the attention of their thinkers. Fichte was the first to give it a quasi-philosophic setting. Since his expulsion from the University of Jena in 1799, his thought had tended more and more towards mysticism and religion. The influence of this is to be seen in the description of the term "nation." He laid no stress on the community of sentiment or language, though both of these elements are surely important. In the eyes of Fichte a nation was a moral and spiritual whole, the preservation of which formed the highest duty of all its members.

This last postulate led on to a most inspiring truth. Every noble man, said Fichte, valued life not merely as life, but as the source of the eternal. Though the individual must pass away, yet his work may be lasting. It can, however, be lasting only by means of the community in which he lives. The community, or the

nation, enshrines the worthy work of its members and even passes on their activities, so that they are bound up with the life of Humanity. The noble man will long with all the strength of his being that his work may endure.

"But only the independence and continuance of his nation is a pledge to him that it will endure. In order to save his nation he must decide even to die, in order that the nation may live on, and that he may therein live the only life in his power. . . . People and Fatherland in this sense, as bearer of, and security for, earthly immortality, and as that alone which can be eternal here below, far transcends the State, in the usual sense of the term. The State only aims at security of rights and internal peace. All this is only the means, condition, and preparation for that which patriotism essentially aims at, the blossoming of the eternal and divine in the world."

Never have the utterances of a thinker seemed so hopeless of fulfilment as those of Fichte in the winter of 1807-1808. At that time he stood almost alone in his faith in the recovery of Germany. The Prussian capital lay under the hand of a French Marshal, and the sound of the foreign drums sometimes drowned the philosopher's voice. It passes comprehension why Napoleon should have allowed the "Addresses to the German Nation" to be completed. His eagerness to nip in the bud the nascent nationalism of Germany is shown in a phrase of one of his letters to Jerome Bonaparte, that the destruction of German nationality was a fundamental part of his policy. Possibly the first seven lectures seemed to the French spies, who watched everything in Berlin, far too dull and unpractical to

merit the attention of the authorities. But the Nürnberg bookseller, Palm, was shot by Napoleon's orders on a far slighter count than that which was offered by Fichte's eighth "Address."

Events, however, were to give to these disquisitions unexpected force and vitality. Even the earlier "Addresses" did not remain without effect. That was the time when Pestalozzi's speculations and experiments on education began to throw light on a subject hitherto dulled by tradition and rule-of-thumb. The need of strengthening all the powers of the people had been seen during the late humiliating collapse of Prussia; it enabled Stein to carry out his drastic reforms in land tenure and local government, and it swelled the demand for an intelligent education that should have some relation to life. Thus Fichte's pleadings soon took effect in the national system begun under the auspices of Von Humboldt;[1] and the strength of patriotism in the Universities of Prussia was to be seen in the War of Liberation.

The other great event that furthered Fichte's aims was the Spanish rising of the summer of 1808. That mighty event served as a dramatic commentary on the teachings of the German thinker. When a large French force surrendered to the Spanish patriots at Baylen and, again, when Saragossa proudly shook off the grip of her first assailants, men recognized the prophetic foresight of these words: "A nation which, if only in its highest representatives and leaders, is capable of fastening its gaze upon that vision from the

[1] In "Addresses," Nos. IX. and XI. (vol. vii., pp. 401, 428), Fichte distinctly pointed to Pestalozzi's system and urged its trial.

spiritual world, independence, and of being possessed by it as were our earliest forefathers, will certainly prevail over a nation which is only used as a tool for aggrandizement and the subjection of independent peoples." [1]

For the present the Prussian Government did not rise to the height of the occasion. As is well known, Stein quietly set to work to start a national resistance to Napoleon; but the scheme fell through, and the patriotic minister had, first, to resign office, and thereafter, under the pressure of Napoleon's threats, to flee to Vienna. No disappointments, however, could quench the newly aroused patriotism of Germany. To this fact the writer Varnhagen von Ense bears witness in his account of a visit to the sage, Jean Paul Richter, at Baireuth in 1808: "Jean Paul never doubted that the Germans would one day rise against the French as the Spaniards had done, and that Prussia would revenge her insults, and one day give freedom to Germany. All he hoped was that his son would live to see it; he did not conceal that he was educating him to be a soldier. What I told him strengthened his convictions; I brought forward plenty of witnesses to prove how weak was Napoleon's power, and how deeply rooted and strong was the opposition to him in public opinion."[2]

That the patriots underrated their enemy's strength the events of 1813 were to show. The decisive event in Napoleon's overthrow was the resolve of Austria to side with the allies, though in all probability the cal-

[1] "Addresses," vol. vii., p. 390.

[2] "Selections from the Memoirs of Varnhagen von Ense." Translated by Sir A. Duff Gordon (London, 1847), p. 61.

culating Habsburgs would not have taken this step if public opinion in Germany had not set in so strongly against French domination. In any case the bargains which Austria made with the sovereigns of Bavaria and other secondary States soon robbed the German people of the unity and constitutional rule which had seemed to be within their reach. Unionist democrats were slighted, or even persecuted, in the general reaction that followed, and one of the shabbiest acts in the latter part of the reign of Frederick William III. was the suppression of Fichte's "Addresses to the German Nation," by the censorship of the very State which he had sought to strengthen in the days of its weakness. Berlin officialdom pronounced the work "calculated to lead astray and to beget mere phantoms," and the next editions of the work had to be produced in Saxony.[1]

Of a truth, Napoleon's task was easy as long as he had to browbeat and curb the old governments. The narrowness of aim, stupidity and weakness of his official opponents on the continent have perhaps never been surpassed. Only when the peoples themselves were aroused by Napoleon's provocations was there a reasonable chance of overthrowing his power. The Emperor Alexander and Czartoryski foresaw the possibility of marshalling the peoples against him;[2]

[1] "Fichte's Leben." By J. H. Fichte (second edition, 1862, vol. i., p. 423).

[2] "The most powerful weapon hitherto used by the French, and still threatening the other European States, is the general opinion which France has managed to promulgate, that her cause is the cause of national liberty and prosperity. It would be shameful to Humanity that so noble a cause should be regarded as the

and Canning acted in this spirit in the critical year 1808. But various events foiled their efforts, or at least postponed success, for many years. That success was, in part at least, due to the thinkers of Europe. It is the glory of Wordsworth, Schiller and Fichte that they handed on the teachings of the earlier part of the Revolution, and sought to array public opinion against Napoleon as having degraded the cause of freedom in France, and as threatening the independence of all neighbouring nations. The source of their antipathy to him was at bottom the same; they saw that his policy was fatal to the higher development of mankind. Amidst the thunder of his cannon, and under the numbing influence of his personality the higher aims of the recent past were lost to view. By the side of the one towering figure Humanity itself was dwarfed.

The thinkers whose teachings we have passed in brief review, felt their way towards a cure for these evils. The two poets, of course, did not formulate their teaching as Fichte did in his very lengthy lectures. In Wordsworth's sonnets and Schiller's great drama there is no plea for a national education, no disquisition on nationality. But both poets sang of a freer and nobler national life in the future. Wordsworth's appeals to England to rise above petty selfishness and hark

monopoly of a government which does not in any respect deserve to be the defender of it; it would be dangerous for all the Powers any longer to leave to France the great advantage of seeming to occupy such a position. The good of Humanity, the true interest of the lawful authorities, and the success of the enterprise contemplated by the two Powers [Russia and England], demand that they should deprive France of this formidable weapon." (Alexander's Secret Instructions to M. Novosiltzoff, Sept. 11th, 1804.)

back to the ideals of Milton's day, when men lived plainly, thought loftily, and fought stubbornly in the cause of freedom, are in their way as uplifting as any words that Fichte uttered. Both of the poets saw that triumph could scarcely come unless the peoples threw themselves heart and soul into the struggle. Neither of them had any hope in kings and governors. To statesmen and generals Wordsworth never vouchsafed a single line. The deaths of Pitt, Nelson and Moore left him unmoved, probably because they were the agents of government. But men who fought for and by the choice of the people inspired him to sing. To Palafox, Schill, and Hofer he indited some of his most spirited verses. Finally, the sonnet beginning,

> High deeds, O Germans, are to come from you,

composed in February, 1807, may take rank as a prophecy no less remarkable than those of Schiller and Fichte. In it the Cumbrian poet appealed to the German nation to rise up in its ancient might and overthrow the Napoleonic kings.

In all essentials, then, Wordsworth, Schiller, and Fichte were in accord, alike in the reasons that moved them to hatred of the French Emperor and in their belief in the future deliverance of Europe from the burden of his domination. In England, where the struggle against Napoleon never ceased, the poet received less attention than the dramatist and the philosopher aroused among their countrymen. Indeed, Wordsworth's attitude towards the Napoleonic struggle was misunderstood by the later poets, Shelley and Byron, who had not seen, as he had seen, the earlier days of the Revolution and its deterioration in and

after the year 1796. But it must be confessed that the utterances of the elder poet during the time of reaction after 1815 did much to tarnish his earlier influence. Schiller was perhaps happier in the time of his death; he never saw the night of his country's despair or the glad dawn of her deliverance. The lot of Fichte was the happiest. His life was not prolonged to the dreary time of disenchantment that came after 1815; and yet he lived long enough to see the adoption of systems of national education and national conscription in Prussia, and to end his days amidst that sublime epic of the War of Liberation for which his noble words had helped to prepare the way.

II

PITT'S PLANS FOR THE SETTLEMENT OF EUROPE

SO small a part of the archives of the British Foreign Office relating to the Napoleonic era has been published that the details of the great Corsican's policy towards the chief Continental States are even yet but imperfectly known. It is the object of this article to bring together some gleanings of research in that little-worked field in the hope of making good some of the defects in our knowledge of that important period.

There are few more pathetic figures in our parliamentary history than that of the younger Pitt, in and after the year 1793. That cataclysmic year divided the life of the young statesman into two unequal and very dissimilar parts. The former period, radiant with promise for the United Kingdom, and marked by an almost unbroken series of triumphs won by the young Prime Minister over parliamentary opponents and foreign rivals, offers a painfully sharp contrast to the time of war, dearth, deficits, party schisms, diplomatic failures and military catastrophes that darkened the manhood of the would-be reformer and carried him to an early grave. The contrast has so often been pointed out that it is needless to depict it once more.

Neither is it necessary now to clear Pitt's memory from the charges so unfairly brought against him by his enemies in his own day, and by partisan writers up to a comparatively recent period, of having plunged his country into war with France in 1793. Herr von Sybel in Germany and M. Sorel in France have proved that the burden of blame for the declaration of war which the French Convention launched against Great Britain and Holland on February 1st, 1793, must rest on the inexperienced and hot-headed men who then were struggling for power at Paris. What is not so well known is the part which Pitt took in the efforts to find some means of general pacification in the twelve years that followed. In order to bring the subject within the scope of a single article it will be desirable to limit our inquiry to the years 1795, 1798-1799, and 1804-1805; the terms of peace will be stated wherever it is possible, in the exact words used in the British official despatches.

These despatches were of course drawn up by the minister then holding the portfolio for Foreign Affairs, that is, by Lord Grenville in the first two periods, by Lord Harrowby from May to December, 1804, and by Lord Mulgrave from January, 1805, to the time of Pitt's death a year later. Canning was Under Secretary of State from the year 1796 to the time of Pitt's resignation in 1801, and probably exerted some influence on the despatches then sent out. But it is no exaggeration to say that the spirit which animated them in all three periods emanated from William Pitt. There is a unity of conception in the British policy of that decade which would have been lacking had that policy been shaped by the three ministers named above; and

assuredly in the deepening tragedy of European history at the close of the great statesman's life no minister but "the pilot that weathered the storm" would have dared to shape the ship's course. Assuming, then, alike from internal evidence and from the conditions of the case, that the British Foreign Office was directed in the main by the Prime Minister, we may call the British plans for the pacification of Europe in those years the plans of William Pitt.

The first of them dates from the month of October, 1795. There were good grounds for not making any overtures to the French Government before that time. The first requisite in the opening of diplomatic negotiations is that there should be some elements of stability in the two Governments concerned. The Pitt Ministry was well established, as many division lists showed; but the rule of the Girondin and Jacobin groups that rose to power with each turn of the revolutionary wheel offered no guarantee for the permanence of any treaty signed by them. The year 1795 brought somewhat better prospects for a general pacification. In accordance with their own private interests, Tuscany and Prussia made peace with France in February and April respectively; Spain followed their example in the month of July. The suppression of the malcontents of Paris on 13th Vendémiaire (October 5th), by Bonaparte, and the installation of the Directory in power also seemed to close the time of street revolutions. Accordingly, in the speech with which George III. opened the autumn session of Parliament on October 19th, 1795, the following pacific suggestion was made.

"Should this crisis terminate in any order of things

compatible with the tranquillity of other countries, and affording a reasonable expectation of security and permanence in any treaty which might be concluded, the appearance of a disposition to negotiate for a general peace on just and equitable terms will not fail to be met, on my part, with an earnest desire to give it the fullest and speediest effect."

This declaration was the more remarkable, inasmuch as on the first day of that month the French Convention had passed a decree, declaring Belgium, Limburg, Luxemburg, and the former Bishopric of Liège, to be "parties intégrantes et inséparables de la République française"; it further declared that this annexation was extended in principle to the German lands on the left bank of the Rhine. In vain had the Moderates, under the lead of Lanjuinais, pointed out that this decree and its corollary, must lead to unending war. The motion was carried by acclamation, and the Republic thus pledged itself to the principle of the "natural frontiers," against which Pitt vainly struggled for a decade, though his policy was ultimately to emerge triumphant.

In the first important document of the British Foreign Office that relates to the prospects of a general pacification there seems to be a note of surprise and incredulity as to the reality of the French claims for Belgium and the Rhine boundary. In a "most secret" despatch, signed by Lord Grenville at Downing Street, on December 22nd, 1795 and sent to Sir Morton Eden, the British ambassador at Vienna, the aims of Ministers are set forth at great length. If war should continue, the allies (Great Britain, Austria and Sardinia), must strive to bring Russia into the

coalition against France. On the other hand, the advent of peace might be hastened by the following diplomatic procedure:

"His Majesty [George III.] is of opinion that if in the course of the winter no overtures for negotiation should be received from the French Government, much advantage might be eventually derived even from a more direct declaration conveyed to that country of a willingness to enter into a discussion of the terms of peace, particularly as, in the present disposition of the people in France, such a step might tend in the most effectual manner to embarrass the present leaders, supposing them to persevere in the views of aggrandizement and extension of limits which have not been disclaimed. If any such step were at any time to be taken by His Majesty, the utmost care would be used to fulfil to their utmost extent, the existing engagements between His Majesty and his allies."

We may pause here to note that a large part of the French people wished for peace, and distrusted the policy of the "natural frontiers" for which the Convention had recently declared. The contrast between the cool common sense of the French people and the excitability of their Assemblies is well known; and the evidence of several French memoir-writers of the year 1795, particularly that of Pontécoulant, seems to show that, until the victories of Bonaparte inflamed the public mind, there was more desire for peace than for the incorporation of some millions of Germans and Flemings in the Republic.

The good faith of the British Ministry in proclaiming its desire for a general peace is established in the latter part of the despatch quoted above, wherein the terms of a general settlement are set forth for private

discussion with the Austrian Government. The first condition of peace on which the British Government laid stress was

"the endeavour of procuring for the royalists in the interior [of France] a general amnesty, and the option either of remaining in their country under the existing government, and in the undisturbed enjoyment of such effects as may be continued or restored to them, or of disposing of those effects by sale, and of carrying with them the proceeds thereof to any asylum in any other country which they may prefer."

Secondly, Great Britain would expect to retain certain of the French colonial possessions which she had conquered, though she would be ready "to facilitate by some sacrifices such terms of peace in Europe as may conduce to general tranquillity." It was in pursuance of this resolve that the Pitt Ministry declined to take part in the continental campaigns and threw all the weight of British armaments against the French colonies and navy, in the belief that that was the surest way of compelling France to forego her European conquests. This decision was certainly unwise; the abstention of Great Britain from continental warfare annoyed our allies and therefore contributed in some measure to the break-up of the first three coalitions.

Thirdly, in the proposed terms of peace the first importance was assigned to the Netherlands. The French conquest of the Austrian Netherlands (Belgium) and their abrogation of the rights of the Dutch over the navigation of the River Scheldt had been the fundamental causes of war in 1793. Since the accession of William III. it had been the cardinal principle of British policy to prevent the French gaining the upper

hand in the Netherlands. Pitt's brilliant success in framing the Triple Alliance of 1788 between Great Britain, Prussia, and Holland seemed to debar the French monarchy for ever from all interference in the affairs of Holland; but only six years later, the revolutionary armies overran that land, expelled the House of Orange, and set up the Batavian Republic under conditions that made it completely dependent on that of France. Accordingly, Pitt's first aim was the expulsion of the French and the erection of some barrier against their encroachments on that open frontier.

An Anglo-Prussian compact being impossible now that Prussia had deserted the coalition and figured as the expectant follower of France, the British Government turned to Austria. The fervent wish of that most ambitious and most unfortunate of the Habsburgs, Joseph II., had been to exchange his distant and troublesome Netherland provinces for the Electorate of Bavaria. This exchange had met with almost as keen opposition at London as it had at Berlin; and the accession of the more prudent Francis II., on whom the teachings of adversity were not lost, seemed to have dealt the deathblow to that daring scheme, which is therefore but cursorily referred to in the following passage of the despatch of December 22nd, 1795:

"His Majesty is of the opinion, that as the Netherlands constitute the great link of connection between this Country and Austria, the interest of the system of Triple Alliance[1] essentially requires that those provinces should be restored to their lawful sovereign. And His Majesty is further of opinion that no other equally

[1] Then recently concluded between Great Britain, Austria and Russia.

effectual mode could be devised of rendering those Provinces a barrier against the progress of France in that quarter, and thereby securing the general repose of Europe; and that consequently the other plans which have occasionally been suggested of an exchange of them for Bavaria, of their being placed under the dominion of a younger branch of the House of Austria, or of their being formed into a separate State, independent both of Austria and France, would, for reasons which are obvious, and which in this stage of the business it is not necessary to detail, be far less satisfactory in their result and consequently less calculated to justify any sacrifices on the part of this country for their attainment. The restoration therefore of the Netherlands to Austria and the possession of them by that Power will, it is hoped, be considered as the first object in any plan of pacification with France in Europe, to be concerted by the three Allied Powers. The King is, however, fully persuaded of the existence of the difficulties which have been represented by the Austrian Government as arising from the present dismantled state of the fortresses in those Provinces and from the anarchy which has so long prevailed in them. His Majesty cannot therefore withhold his assent to the propriety of the reasoning employed by Austria to show the importance of an acquisition of territory to serve as a connection and barrier to those Provinces. And His Majesty would very willingly concur in any practicable Plan for procuring at a general peace the annexation of the County of Liège and of that part of the Dutch territory and possessions which has been ceded to France by the late Treaty; and even some barrier on the side of France, if the present circumstances of the war should be so far varied by future success on the part of Austria as to afford any reasonable prospect in this respect."

This reference to the late treaty relates to the cession of the Dutch lands around Maestricht to France by

the Treaty of the Hague (May 16th, 1795). With respect to the Kingdom of Sardinia, whose fortunes were to be so chequered, the Pitt Ministry merely contemplated its reconstruction by the recovery of Savoy from the French Republic. The despatch does not name the county of Nice, its recovery for that kingdom being perhaps deemed impossible after the great victory recently gained by Masséna at Loano. The peace was, of course, to include Naples and Portugal. Its general aim was the restoration of the *status quo ante bellum*, the exceptions being the annexation by Austria of the former Bishopric of Liège and of certain German lands that would connect her Belgic possessions with those of Swabia. In this case the Habsburg dominions would have stretched without a break from Ostend to Landau and Mainz, while upon Austria would have rested the task of defending Germany against France, which Prussia was destined to take up in 1814 and triumphantly to exploit in the war of 1870.

What were the views of the Austrian Government on these plans? No explicit answer was forthcoming, but on March 2nd, 1796, Eden, our ambassador at that Court reported the refusal of the Emperor Francis to subscribe to the joint declaration to France which Pitt and Grenville had recommended, and his desire in due course to issue a declaration of his own. On March 5th he stated that the Emperor wished to regain his Netherlands, but if that were impossible he must seek an indemnity in Würtemberg or in part of Bavaria. The action of France was even more fatal to Pitt's proposals. A draft of them had been handed to the French envoy by Mr. Wickham, our minister in Switzerland; but the answer that came early in April brought

a decisive refusal from the French Directory. It is surely significant that that was the very time when Bonaparte was preparing those terrible blows against the Austro-Sardinian forces in the pass between the Apennines and Alps which were destined to turn the course of history. He had submitted his famous plan of campaign to the Director Carnot, who gave it his enthusiastic support. Doubtless this explains the instant rejection of the British proposals. Pitt, on the other hand, had so far believed in their acceptance as to postpone the payment of the covenanted subsidies to our allies, and thus left them ill prepared to stand the strain of Bonaparte's warfare.

The brilliant campaigns of Bonaparte in Italy shattered the hopes of the allies, and Austria suddenly agreed to the terms of peace which he dictated at Leoben, in the heart of her dominions. In the resulting Treaty of Campo Formio (October 17th, 1797) she ceded to France her Belgic provinces and shared with Bonaparte the spoils of the defenceless Venetian Republic. The gain of the greater part of Venetia, together with the reversion to the Archbishopric of Salzburg, was purchased at the price of the signature of a secret article whereby Austria agreed to use her influence, in the forthcoming settlement of German affairs at the Congress of Rastadt, to extend the French boundary to the River Rhine. Her obsequiousness to the exorbitant claims of France at that Congress led to an estrangement from Great Britain, which was increased by her persistent refusal to repay the loan of £1,620,000 lent to her during the late war. The resentment which this conduct aroused was very keen, the British Government declaring again and again that no further

treaty engagement would be entered into until the Court of Vienna fulfilled the pecuniary obligations which its ambassador had contracted by the convention signed in London on May 16th, 1797. It would be tedious to detail the course of this dispute, which for two years held the two Powers apart, until the position of both Powers became precarious owing to the withdrawal of Russia from the Second Coalition.[1]

In the negotiations which led to the formation of this coalition Austria held quite a secondary place. In despair of bringing her to any decisive action for the good of Europe, British statesmen turned to St. Petersburg. There the accession of the Emperor Paul in November, 1796, had given a curious twist to Russian policy. Whether from hatred of his mother, Catharine II., or from love of peace, the new ruler at first reversed the forward policy against France which that ambitious woman was on the point of inaugurating. But Paul's besetting passion, vanity, received a deep wound from Bonaparte's seizure of Malta in June, 1798, not long after the Knights of St. John had placed themselves under the protection of the northern autocrat. He now received many of the outcast knights, who, a little later on, proclaimed him Grand Master of their Order. The British Government was not slow in taking full advantage from the change in the Czar's sentiments resulting from Bonaparte's aggressive act.

A Russian squadron was made ready to reinforce the British fleet in the North Sea, and the views of Russia were found to be favourable to a new coalition against France. Sir Charles Whitworth, British ambassador

[1] Lord Minto's despatch of December 10th 1799, from Vienna in "F. O." Austria, No. 56.

at St. Petersburg, reported to Lord Grenville on July 24th, 1798, that "the object of the war [against France] is now understood to be the re-establishment of general tranquillity on safe and honourable terms, and not the restoration of the French monarchy, such as was proposed, and would never have been departed from, by the late Empress [Catharine II.]." The British Government was more favourable to the restoration of the House of Bourbon, and during the ensuing war convinced the Czar, at least in appearance, that no other solution of the French question than the restoration of the House of Bourbon would bring lasting peace to Europe. In this connection it should be remembered that the declaration of October 1st, 1795, by the French Convention had indissolubly linked the cause of the Republic with the demand for the "natural frontiers," and therefore tended to identify foreign powers, who opposed so great an extension of French territory, with the House of Bourbon and the boundaries with which they had been associated.

If we cast a glance at the future of this question we shall see that events in the year 1814 were destined to show the strength of these differentiating principles. Much as the Czar Alexander disliked the Bourbons, yet after declaring against the "natural frontiers" and their champion, Napoleon, he was brought to see the impossibility of associating the old boundaries of 1791 with any other form of government than that of the traditional monarchy. In a territorial as well as a personal sense Talleyrand uttered the *mot* of the occasion: "Either Bonaparte or Louis XVIII., Sire; anything else is an intrigue."

On all topics but that of the restoration of the

French Bourbons, the British and Russian Governments were in full accord during the war of the Second Coalition, at least, up to the close of the year 1799. Of course the character of the Czar Paul inspired no confidence. The despatches of Sir Charles Whitworth reveal the fickleness of that ruler's resolves and the passion with which he clung to them. Slights inflicted on his pet institution, the Order of St. John, by the Bavarian and Spanish Governments led to the prompt expulsion of their ambassadors from Russia in the depth of winter, the police conducting them to the frontier as if they were felons. Whitworth, in describing these and other instances of headlong caprice, touched on the plague-spot of his character in the words "It is the first moment which decides him."[1]

Nevertheless, the loan dispute with Austria and the hopeless lethargy of the Prussian Court compelled the British Government to intrust the future concert of Europe to this imperial Reuben. Fortunately the Maltese question had not yet overclouded the relations between the two States, and the Czar's feelings were as yet those of gratitude for the prospective deliverance of that island from the French for the benefit of the Order of St. John. "Upon everything relating to us," wrote Whitworth on January 9th, 1799, "he is warm to a degree of enthusiasm." This feeling was largely due to the tactful proposal of the British Ministry that he should act as the founder of a new coalition on terms drawn up by Russia and England, and then submitted to Austria and Prussia for their

[1] Despatch of April 16th, 1799, in "F. O.," Russia, No. 42.

acceptance. The proposal was made in a long despatch of November 16th, 1798, from Downing Street to Lord Whitworth, which urged the need of establishing by previous concert the ultimate objects of the Great Powers; for "no other mode could perhaps be so effectual for preventing a repetition of the circumstances which produced the dissolution of the [first] confederacy against France." The intervention of Russia was most needful to bring about this common understanding and its "punctual execution." The despatch then set forth the details of the proposed action and of the ulterior arrangements which might be aimed at by the Powers.

"No time should be lost in bringing forward at Vienna and Berlin a distinct proposal in the Emperor's name for a plan of general co-operation against France; and this proposal will come with infinitely more weight if it be brought forward as one complete and digested system proposed by His Imperial Majesty and his allies than if the same proposals were to be gradually worked out from the tardy and reluctant explanations of Austria and Prussia. His [Britannic] Majesty would therefore recommend that the Russian ministers at Berlin and Vienna should be instructed to propose the immediate conclusion of a treaty between the four Great Powers, the basis of which should be the employment of their united efforts to reduce France within her ancient limits (an object of evident and pressing interest to the future tranquillity and independence of Europe) and to which every other Power should afterwards be invited to accede.

"On this principle would easily be grounded such engagements as might satisfy the mutual jealousy of Austria and Prussia by limiting and defining the separate advantages which they should respectively

acquire from the success of measures, the great and general advantage of which would be the deliverance of Europe from that state of disquietude and danger in which it must ever remain if France should at a peace retain her conquests.

"The views of Austria appear now to be principally directed towards Italy, where her success would certainly afford least ground of jealousy to Prussia. No objection could reasonably be made at Berlin to the effect of any measures which should lead to the recovery of all the former dominions of Austria in Lombardy, provided it were distinctly understood that no further encroachment should be made on the possessions of the other Powers of Italy. And the reconquest of the Milanese, added to the other acquisitions already made by Austria in Italy, would, it is conceived, furnish a sufficient indemnity to that Power for those exertions which indeed her own safety indispensably requires her to make both on the side of Italy and of Switzerland. It might, therefore, on this ground and in conformity to the principles of the negotiations already established between Austria and Prussia be expressly stipulated that no indemnity should be sought by Austria in Germany.

"The disposition of the King of Prussia to act eventually on the side of Holland for the restoration of the House of Orange and for the establishment of a solid and efficient Government in that country have been intimated to His Majesty; and nothing could more effectually tend to consolidate the tranquillity of Europe than the success of measures to be taken for this purpose, in which His Majesty would willingly co-operate in so far as could in any manner depend on him. It is uncertain whether the Court of Berlin has in view any, and what, objects of separate advantage in addition to that general benefit which would result from the restoration of the tranquillity and security of Europe. It seems, therefore, very im-

portant that the King of P[russia] should on the present occasion be invited to explain himself confidentially and fully on this head, and to define and limit by precise stipulation the nature and extent of any such advantages, if any such are in his contemplation. It being [*sic*] sufficiently evident that there are many objects of this description which might in a great variety of modes be rendered consistent with the general principle of this plan and with those which the Emperor of Russia has already recommended to the adoption of his allies in the negotiation above mentioned.

"From the establishment of the general basis of treaty already laid down, the independence of Switzerland and Holland will necessarily follow; as well as the restoring to the German Empire those parts which were to be ceded to France by the negotiation of Rastadt, and the compelling of the French to renounce the possession of Savoy and the Netherlands. But as these last provinces cannot probably under all the circumstances which have occurred be replaced under the dominion of Austria, and as it may well be doubted whether these acquisitions would be an object of ambition to either of the two great German Powers, it will remain to be considered what plan will be most effectual to provide for the defence of this highly important barrier against the future encroachments of France. None has here occurred which is thought equally effectual and practicable as the uniting those provinces to the Dutch Republic under the administration of a Stadtholder, and with such provisions as may be best adapted to the maintenance of their respective civil and religious constitutions. But on this head His Majesty would willingly receive the suggestions of his Ally, directed, as he is confident they would be, to the same object to which His Majesty looks, that of securing those provinces as far as possible from again falling a prey to the restless ambition

of France; a point the accomplishment of which must always be regarded by His Majesty as being at least equally important with any other object in the whole range of the extensive interests which would be to be [*sic*] adjusted in such a negotiation.

"If it should be found practicable on discussion between the four Great Powers to agree on these leading and principal features of a future arrangement, the smaller objects which may be connected with them would, it is presumed, be easily adjusted. His Majesty would propose that the whole plan should be guaranteed by all the four Powers to each other, and that they should enter into most solemn engagements not to lay down their arms till it shall have been accomplished, and to exclude from the benefit of it anyone amongst themselves who should in any respect deviate from the engagements to be thus taken, both as to the objects themselves and as to the means to be employed for their attainment.

"His Majesty has been induced by his entire reliance on the sentiments and principles of the Emperor of Russia to enable you to open yourself thus fully and confidentially on all the different points which respect the final settlement of Europe. But important as these details are, it is still more so that some adjustment should be made on this subject, and that it should be made by the powerful intervention of the Emperor of Russia, who can alone quiet the jealousies of Austria and Prussia, and by his guarantee give to those Powers a confidence in the mutual execution of their engagements to each other. You will therefore labour to the utmost to induce the Russian Government to adopt, if not this precise plan, at least some definitive plan, grounded as much as possible on similar principles, and to authorize M. de Panin (or such other Minister as may be judged proper for the purpose if, contrary to His Majesty's wishes, any different choice should appear necessary) to enter in H. I. M.'s name

into the necessary stipulations of guaranty or of perseverance in the war till the objects in view shall have been accomplished.

"In the hope of your succeeding in these representations, it is His Majesty's intention to send a Minister[1] to the Continent (and in the first instance to Berlin) amply instructed and empowered to treat and conclude on every point that may have reference to this important and extensive negotiation. This appointment will be announced to you as soon as it is regularly made, and it is probable that the person in question will arrive at Berlin some time before any instructions from Petersburg, given in consequence of this dispatch can reach the Court."

I have cited this despatch very fully because it is the first in which the future settlement of Europe is distinctly foreshadowed. Alike in its strength and comprehensiveness it is in contrast with the plan of December, 1795. As was natural at the earlier period, Pitt and Grenville relied wholly on Austria, and assigned to her the lion's share of the possible conquests, especially the Belgic Netherlands and the German lands to the east of them. Seeing that the Habsburgs had disappointed the hopes then entertained of their military and political capacity, the British Government now proposed that Russia and England should take the initiative in the formation of a strong confederacy, and in determining its aims. As regarded the instrument itself, it must take the form of a league from which all separate interests and secret negotiations with the enemy should be rigidly excluded. The same fond hope has often haunted the minds of framers of coalitions; but the sequel is generally found to justify

[1] Mr. Grenville was chosen for this mission.

the bitterest taunts of the cynic. At any rate, it is worthy of note that all the Continental Powers concerned evaded or betrayed their just obligations to their allies in the ensuing wars. Repeated disasters brought about by their unsteadiness, failed to show the need of the strong and lasting union now urged by the British Government, and only amidst the terrible risks of the campaign of 1814 in the heart of France did the four Powers find their way to that famous compact, the Treaty of Chaumont, which in many of its provisions bears witness to the statesmanlike foresight evinced by Pitt at the close of the year 1798.

Turning from the instrument to the policy for which it was to work, we note several points of interest that mark off the present proposals from those of the past and point the way to the Treaties of Vienna of 1814-1815. First and foremost is the extreme care to obviate or limit the mutual jealousies of Austria and Prussia. The events of the First Coalition, as well as the pitiful proceedings at the Congress of Rastadt, showed the need of some friendly intervention to bring those secular rivals to accord. Russia was obviously the Power best fitted to give friendly advice and in a way that could not be disregarded. The British Government also hinted that the growth of the two great German States might proceed in wholly different directions. Austria might take her indemnities on the side of Italy, where the Milanese, added to her present Venetian province, would afford at once a substantial gain to her power, and a barrier to French incursions in the future. Prussian interests, on the other hand, naturally centred in the House of Orange, closely related to the House of Hohenzollern, and demanded

the expulsion of French influence from Holland and the neighbouring German lands. As to the territories west of the Rhine, the British Government merely stipulated that they must be restored to the Germanic System. Obviously they would provide the means of satisfying the two chief German States at the close of a successful war against France. On this point the despatch was discreetly vague. George III., as Elector of Hanover, had sought to oppose the plans of secularization put forward at the Congress of Rastadt, but it was unlikely that the Church domains west of the Rhine already in the power of France, would ever revert to their former owners. In fact Pitt's plan of December, 1795, showed that he was even then ready to assign those lands to the worthiest champion of German independence.

The most interesting suggestion of all is that which related to Holland. Knowing that the Habsburgs were alike unwilling and unable to defend their former Netherland provinces, Pitt proposed to build up a barrier against France by uniting them to Holland—"with such provisions as may be best adapted to the maintenance of their respective civil and religious constitutions." As far as the present writer is aware, this is the first emergence in official documents of an idea which took effect in 1814, but without adequate safeguards of a constitutional kind; the lack of them was to lead to the severance of 1830.

Equally noteworthy is the proposal contained in the later despatch of August 27th, 1799,[1] that Great Britain would gladly restore to Holland all colonial conquests

[1] "F. O.," Russia, No. 44.

made during the present war, "en ne se reservant que cette partie de ses conquêtes qui sert essentiellement à la défense de ses possessions de l'Inde." This is also the first intimation of Pitt's resolve to keep the Cape of Good Hope,—a determination which dictated one of the terms of his negotiation with Prussia in the autumn of the year 1805. It is needless to point out that here again he and his coadjutors foreshadowed the settlement of the years 1814-1815.

The despatch just quoted contained no reference to the affairs of Piedmont, which had recently been occupied by French troops—an omission probably due to the King of Sardinia having abdicated only seven days before the sending of the despatch. Subsequent despatches show that the British Government took a warm interest in the restoration of that unhappy monarch.

It would be interesting, did our space permit, to follow the clues provided by the British archives which explain the bewildering changes of policy during the war of the Second Coalition. They throw fuller light on the pitiful weakness of the Prussian Court and the obstinate self-seeking of Austria. Despite the alluring offers held forth by Mr. Grenville, the special envoy to Berlin, and the threats of invasion by a Russian army, Frederick William III. clung to his neutral policy, and thereby paralyzed the plan concerted at midsummer, 1799, of sending an Anglo-Russian force for the expulsion of the French from Holland. For a brief period Prussia seemed to be about to join the allies in that quarter. Lord Grenville's despatch of July 2nd, 1799, refers to the strange proposition of His Prussian Majesty that he would withhold his co-

operation until a Russian force should have occupied the fortresses or positions of the lower or middle part of the Rhine. Clearly, the failure of the allied expedition to Holland was due very largely to the oscillations of Prussian policy, which were possibly more harmful than open hostility.

Equally futile were the efforts of Great Britain and Russia to induce Austria to declare her aims in the war. On July 17th—28th, 1799, the Czar expressed to Whitworth his concern that Austria seemed to be wholly bent on her own aggrandizement "instead of co-operating for the salutary purpose of re-establishing, as far as might be practicable, the ancient order of things." To do him justice, Paul showed great forbearance under prolonged provocations. That splendid leader, Suvóroff, in spite of his brilliant victories with the Austro-Russian forces in Italy, was alternately lectured and slighted by the statesmen of Vienna until his hatred of them rose to fury. To end this friction the British Ministry proposed to the Czar early in June, 1799, that Suvóroff and his men should leave the Austrians to their own devices and join the other Russian army then drawing near to Switzerland on the north-east. The Czar and the Court of Vienna successively agreed to this re-arrangement of forces, which promised to lead to the expulsion of the French from Switzerland and the invasion of Franche-Comté by the combined Russian armies. Pitt and Grenville hoped that the close of the year would see Suvóroff at Lyons, whither the Comte d'Artois would proceed to raise the royal standard.[1] Of course, the reality was

[1] Grenville's "most secret" despatch of August 27th, 1799, to Whitworth in "F. O.," Russia, No. 44.

far different. Owing to the fatuous strategy of the Austrians, the two Russian armies never effected their junction, and the allies lost Switzerland. This disaster and the determination of Austria to treat the possessions of the King of Sardinia as if they were at her own disposal filled to overflowing the cup of the Czar's wrath. At the end of the year he withdrew from the war, and subsequent events completed the ruin of the coalition. Thus fell to the ground the most promising scheme for the re-establishment of the balance of power which Europe was to find for fourteen weary years.[1]

The collapse of the Second Coalition, which resulted quite as much from internal jealousies as from the blows showered on it by Masséna, Bonaparte, and Moreau, left France in a position of greater power than ever and assured the personal supremacy of the First Consul. In March, 1801, Pitt resigned office, and Addington held the reins of power up to May 10th, 1804. The conclusion of the Peace of Amiens, and its rupture in May 1803, need not be noticed here.

[1] Lord Minto, our ambassador at Vienna, after July 3rd, 1799, reported on August 10th the surprising statements of Baron Thugut, the Austrian Chancellor, that the Emperor Francis looked on Suvóroff as an Austrian general commanding Austrian troops, and that he considered "the conquest of Piedmont as one made by Austria of an enemy's country." The instructions sent to Minto from Downing Street in June (date left blank), 1799 ["F. O." Austria, No. 56], ordered him to urge the restoration of the King of Sardinia to his States, though if Austria insisted on the acquisition of the Novarese, that would not be objected to. The Kingdom of Sardinia must, however, be strengthened by giving it access to the sea. As far as I know, this is the first official suggestion as to the propriety of adding the Genoese Republic to Piedmont.

Napoleon's acts of aggression on the Continent would certainly have been less flagrant had England been under the guidance of Pitt, whose firmness and courage Napoleon at all times respected. For the Addington Ministry and its conciliatory professions he had a sovereign contempt. In his "View of the State of the Republic," of 3rd Ventose, an XI (February 22nd, 1803), the First Consul had openly boasted the inability of England to frame another coalition in case war should break out between the two Powers. War did break out in May, 1803; and before long his defiant disregard of the feelings and interests of continental rulers roused them from their apathy. In particular the seizure of the Duc d'Enghien on German soil (March, 1804), the extension of French influence over all neighbouring lands, and the refusal to offer any suitable indemnity to the King of Sardinia for the loss of his dominions on the mainland, one and all helped to convince the young Emperor of Russia, Alexander I., that no accord was possible between France and Russia.

The inner causes that contributed to this decision have been set forth in the previous Essay. Here we need notice only its political result, namely, that on June 26th, 1804, Count Simon Worontzoff, Russian ambassador in London, made overtures to the British Government "respecting a general concert of the European Powers." The details of the proposal are not to be found in our archives, doubtless because it was made orally. But on the same day Pitt's confidant, Lord Harrowby, sent a long despatch to our ambassador at St. Petersburg stating the unlimited trust of George III. in the Czar, and urging that steps should be taken at once to come to a clear under-

standing with Austria and if possible with Prussia. Further proof that the initiative in the formation of the Third Coalition came from Russia rather than from Great Britain, will be found in the important and hitherto unpublished despatch of November 20th, 1803 [O.S.] from the Russian Chancellery to Count Woronzoff printed in the Appendix to this volume.

In the course of the long negotiations that went on between the Courts of London and St. Petersburg, the British Government sent two despatches which show Pitt's opinion; first, as to the minimum which might be accepted from Napoleon for the sake of procuring peace immediately, though on a less satisfactory footing; and, secondly, as to the changes which would lead to a complete and lasting settlement of Europe.

The former of these alternatives is set forth in Lord Mulgrave's despatch of January 21st, 1805, to Lord Gower, British ambassador at St. Petersburg. As Lord Mulgrave took over the duties of the Foreign Office from Lord Harrowby on January 11th, we may safely assume that this despatch was in substance that of the Prime Minister or of the whole Cabinet. An event of some importance had occurred. On January 2nd, Napoleon sent to George III. a letter intimating a wish for the cessation of hostilities and the conclusion of a general peace.[1] The British despatch stated that

[1] Even Thiers, who upholds the sincerity of a similar proposal made by Bonaparte to George III. at the New Year of 1800, questions it in the present case: "A proposition of peace was too palpable a parade of affected moderation, or seemed the offspring simply of a desire to speak to the King of England in the style and language of a monarch." (Thiers, Bk. xxi, *ad init.*) Sir J. B. Warren's despatch of August 30th, 1804, from St. Petersburg, to Lord Harrowby, states that George III. had promised

Napoleon's offer of peace had been preceded by an address to the Corps Législatif at Paris, which held out conditions of peace that must be regarded as "totally inadmissible." Nevertheless, it was desirable to send an answer that would embody the aims of Russia and England, and convince the world of their moderation. The despatch then proceeds as follows:

"The Conditions which to His [Britannic] Majesty appear indispensably necessary, and without which no hope can be entertained of permanent tranquillity in Europe, are as follows.

"1st. The restoration of the King of Sardinia in His ancient Dominions. 2nd. The entire evacuation of Italy by the French troops. 3rd. Security for the Kingdom of Naples. 4th. The independence of Switzerland. 5th. The evacuation of Hanover. 6th. The restoration of the Republic of the United Provinces [Dutch Netherlands], and a further provision for its future security and permanent independence by the establishment of a sufficient barrier towards the Flemish frontier. 7th. The re-establishment of fortresses on the right bank of the Rhine, for the safety of the Germanic Body, and for the prevention of sudden and hostile irruptions into Germany.

"It further appears to His Majesty, extremely desirable that no time should be lost in making these overtures, the result of which may be so certainly anticipated; and, if the Emperor of Russia should concur in this opinion, it may be suggested, for the consideration of His Imperial Majesty, whether, on this occasion, the ordinary form and usual course of Negotiations might not be laid aside with advantage. In which case His Imperial Majesty might take upon

to Alexander I. that he would not make peace with France without the participation of Russia.

himself, with dignity and effect, the determination of this great question, by sending to Paris an accredited person, authorized to declare the sentiments of His Imperial Majesty, and directed for that purpose to demand a personal audience of the Chief of the French Government, to whom, in the name of His Imperial Majesty, he might state, with temper and firmness, the only grounds, on which it appears possible that permanent tranquillity can be secured to France itself, or to Europe, and the earnest wish of the Emperor to promote this object, at the same time expressly declaring His Imperial Majesty to be desirous, before he should have recourse to active military operations, to make one effort more for establishing this arrangement by pacific agreement; but that he also thought it right, frankly to avow that his armies were already on their march, and that, if such an agreement could not be effected without delay, he should feel it indispensable to employ his utmost exertions, in conjunction with Great Britain and other Powers, to enforce those conditions which appear absolutely essential for the safety of Europe."

These terms were the irreducible minimum which the British Government offered for the sake of obtaining an immediate cessation of hostilities. Their reasonableness must be admitted. They left France in possession of her "natural frontiers," except on the side of Savoy and the banks of the lower Rhine. That is to say, they were nearly as favourable to Napoleon as the famous Frankfort terms which the allies held out to him for a short space in the weeks following upon his great disaster at Leipzig in the autumn of 1813. In the present case, the Pitt Ministry felt confident that the overtures would be rejected; and there was surely no need of accompanying them with the scarcely veiled

threat of hostilities which the Russian Government was advised to hold out. Clearly the British Cabinet did not wish for peace on these terms, and only recommended the mission to Paris in order to expose the exorbitant nature of Napoleon's claims and to embark the rulers of Russia, Austria, and perhaps Prussia, on a policy of active resistance.

The real wishes of the Pitt Cabinet were set forth in the draft of an Anglo-Russian treaty sent to Lord Gower, British Ambassador at St. Petersburg, on March 15th, 1805. It suggested the formation of a league between Great Britain, Russia and Austria for the attainment of the aims set forth in the first six of the demands just quoted; but, in addition to the complete evacuation of Italy and North Germany, the allies must, it was suggested "endeavour to form such an arrangement with respect to those countries and to all other acquisitions made since the French Revolution, which may be recovered from France on the left bank of the Rhine, as shall be judged most proper to constitute an effectual barrier hereafter against future encroachments on the part of France."

The questions of the numbers of the allied forces and the subsidies allowed by Great Britain were then stated in Articles II.-V.; and a separate article stipulated that, should the King of Prussia join the proposed league, he, as well as the King of Sardinia and the Dutch Republic, should gain such an accession of strength on the side of Italy and out of the lands regained from France on the left bank of the Rhine "as may be not inconsistent with the objects specified in this treaty and may at the same time serve as a compensation proportioned to their respective efforts in

the common cause and likewise contribute to establish a more powerful and effectual barrier against future projects of aggrandizement on the part of France."

Thus, as in Pitt's proposals of November 16th, 1798, to Russia, the allotment of the lands on the left bank of the Rhine was to depend, partly on the needs of the "barrier" policy, partly on the exertions of the confederated Powers.

Except in two matters, which will be noticed presently, the Russian Government accepted the British proposals. On March 22nd, Gower wrote to Mulgrave: "His Imperial Majesty adopts the suggestion contained in your Lordship's despatch [that of January 21st, 1805] of sending to Paris an accredited Minister who shall state to Bonaparte in person the grounds upon which alone any hopes of the re-establishment of peace can be entertained. Your Lordship will learn with great satisfaction that M. Novosiltzoff is the person to whom this important mission is to be confided. The soundness of his principles and the firmness of his character banish those apprehensions which the opening of a negotiation at Paris between Russia and France would otherwise naturally excite."[1] These last words are noteworthy as furnishing one among many proofs afforded by the British archives that there were none of those differences between the generous Russian overtures and the frigid egotism of Pitt's policy on

[1] Lord Mulgrave's despatch of May 7th, 1805 to Count Woronzoff empowered M. Novosiltzoff to speak at Paris, conditionally, on behalf of Great Britain as to the possible terms of peace. All the important despatches in the British archives relating to the Third Coalition, are on the point of being published by the Royal Historical Society, under my supervision.

which M. Thiers has so imaginatively dwelt. That historian, in fact, has been led astray by the perusal of drafts of unofficial conversations which were of no great importance, and he had not at hand the means of checking them by the official reports and State papers which the editor of the Czartoryski Memoirs has very properly included in those important volumes.

The secret instructions which the Czar gave on September 11th, 1804, to Novosiltzoff for his important mission to London show that on all continental questions the two Powers were in complete accord. Alexander therein stated that the King of Sardinia must recover as much of his former territories as possible, but should be advised to grant his people "a free and wise constitution." Switzerland must be strengthened by gaining a "defensible frontier." Holland also must be reconstituted, probably under some hereditary Stadtholder; and a federal constitution was hinted at for the Germanic System. France must be restricted "within its just limits";[1] and, as the restoration of Monarchy appeared to be necessary, the question of the ruler would have to be decided partly by the voice of the French people, partly by an understanding between Russia and Great Britain. Efforts were to be made "to attach nations to their governments," and to frame a treaty "as a basis for the reciprocal relations of the European States."

The only difference of opinion then existing between the two Governments related to the British maritime

[1] Novosiltzoff's report of his conversations with British Ministers shows that by "just limits" he understood the "ancient limits," *i.e.*, those of 1791 (Czartoryski Memoirs, ii., chaps. iv. and vii.).

code—"the only matter as to which the British Cabinet is not free from reproach"—which it would be desirable to modify. That Russian policy was not wholly disinterested appeared in the clause stipulating that both Powers ought "to obtain some advantages for themselves to compensate them for their expenditure"; and this was especially so in the case of Russia, if her neighbours, Austria, Prussia, and Sweden gained in territory. Novosiltzoff, after conversations with Lord Harrowby and Pitt, officially reported to his Government: "The opinions of the British Minister entirely coincide with the intentions of His Majesty the Emperor as regards the points which I had the opportunity of touching on."[1] In fact, the aims of both Governments were enlightened and statesmanlike, but by no means lost sight of self-interest, as wise policy never does.

The Memorandum which Czartoryski drew up during the course of the year 1804 as to a desirable resettlement of Europe perhaps need not be taken so seriously as it has been by German historians; for it betrays the eager energy of the "new broom" rather than the mature aims of a well-informed statesman. In it he assigns Prussia proper and Constantinople to Russia (as though both of them could be gained at one gulp); Bavaria to Austria; and Berg, Fulda, Ansbach and Mecklenburg to the Kingdom of Prussia (which already possessed Ansbach!).

Pitt also desired the aggrandizement of Great Britain, but he persuaded his sovereign to agree to give back all the colonial conquests made from France and her allies (Spain and Holland) in the present war, pro-

[1] Czartoryski Memoirs, ii., chap. vii.

vided that the *status quo* could be assured on the Continent. The part of Lord Mulgrave's despatch of April 22nd, 1805, in which this offer was made, deserves to be quoted in full. After setting forth to Count Woronzoff the conditions of a Continental peace on which Great Britain and Russia were agreed, and which M. Novosiltzoff was authorized to state officially at Paris on behalf of both Governments, the despatch proceeds:

"His [Britannic] Majesty, animated with the desire of promoting and providing for the general safety and permanent prosperity of Europe, is prepared to make great sacrifices for the attainment of this important object. Should therefore the Chief of the French Government manifest a disposition to accede to a general peace to be proposed by His Imperial Majesty on the basis of the conditions above detailed, His Majesty has no hesitation in authorizing Monsieur Novosiltzoff (as the Minister of a Power with whom His Majesty is engaged in the strictest concert and confidence) to declare in His Majesty's name, and on his behalf, that, on the conclusion of such Peace, His Majesty on his part will restore all his conquests made in this war from France or from any of her European allies in any quarter of the globe."

Mulgrave in his despatch of June 7th to Gower even offered to accept Minorca in place of Malta, provided that Prussia gained enough lands between the Meuse and Moselle to protect Holland effectively. The offer was not to be renewed if Novosiltzoff's mission failed.

As far as the present writer is aware, these offers of the British Government have never up to this time been made public. At any rate they are not alluded to by historians of this period, or by biographers of Pitt.

This results, no doubt, from the fact that M. Novosiltzoff never went to Paris. As is well known, Napoleon's annexation of the Ligurian, or Genoese, Republic—and that too at the very time (June 4th) when he knew that the Russian Envoy was expecting the permission of the French authorities to enter the French Empire—was an affront that could not be passed over; the envoy who was to plead the cause of moderation and surrender of conquests at once returned to Russia. The terms which he was charged to offer were therefore not made public in their entirety; a fact which enabled Thiers and other historians to dilate at will on the greed of England and the weak good nature of the Czar.[1]

There were, however, as has been hinted above, two matters on which the British and Russian Governments were sharply at variance. These were the surrender of Malta by Great Britain, and the mitigation of her maritime code. Here Pitt refused to recede by a hair's breadth. He maintained that both were essential to the strength of his country. The value of Malta was thus set forth in Lord Mulgrave's despatch of May 7th

[1] Take the following sentences from Thiers' Book XXI: "The Russian, plan had undergone but a short process of elaboration at London and it emerged shorn of every generous element and even of any practical character it possessed. It was reduced to a scheme of destruction against France." . . . "To acquiesce in the determination of England and succumb to the rigours of her intractable ambition was [for Russia] to accept a truly subordinate part in the eyes of Europe." Apparently the Prussian Foreign Minister, Hardenberg, did not know of the offer of Great Britain to restore her colonial conquests of the present war: he did not include it among the Novosiltzoff proposals. ("Denkwürdigkeiten," ii., pp. 171-172.)

to Count Worontzoff: "The importance of Malta to His Majesty's distant possessions is become obvious since the manifestation of the French views in Egypt and of the evident danger which may from thence arise to the British possessions in India." [1] Clearly, then, it was Napoleon's forward policy in the Mediterranean which in 1805 impelled the British Ministry to keep Malta, just as the same motive two years earlier prompted the first resolve to hold it as a pledge for the security of the overland route to India. On the subject of the British maritime code the official defence was equally determined but less convincing. The final refusal to the Czar's claims on this question was made in Lord Mulgrave's despatch of September 6th, 1805, when that Minister declared that His Majesty could not "shake the basis of that public law on which the prosperity of Great Britain is established, and by the maintenance of which His Majesty is at this moment enabled to contribute so largely to the efforts of Europe for its own deliverance." [2] Whether the maritime code contributed as much as Ministers thought to the wealth of Britain is open to question; it is unfortunately certain that the rigid maintenance of our right of search and other customs exasperating to neutrals did great harm to her prestige and weakened the Anglo-Russian alliance at the outset.

Not until July 20th, did the Czar decide to ratify the treaty provisionally signed on April 11th, 1805, at St.

[1] "F. O.," Russia, No. 57. So, too, in the long "F. O." despatch of June 5th to Count Worontzoff, in which Mulgrave (or really Pitt), insists that Malta in British hands was a safeguard for Mediterranean States against France.

[2] "F. O.," Russia, No. 59.

Petersburg, and he then registered his protest at the retention of Malta and the maintenance of the maritime code by Great Britain. This delay was one of the untoward events that helped to ruin the campaign.

The British Ministry had throughout been bent on securing the adhesion of Prussia to the Third Coalition and sought to dissuade the Czar from adopting coercive measures which would probably throw her into the arms of France. Czartoryski favoured a policy of menace and coercion, doubtless with the hope that a Russo-Prussian war would lead to the cession of Prussian Poland to his master. Though the Pitt Ministry and Lord Gower do not seem to have fathomed these ulterior designs, they yet pressed on the Russian Foreign Minister the urgent need of "bidding high" for the support of the legions of the great Frederick.[1] Prussia indeed held a position which able and determined hands might have turned to great advantage. The forces of Russia, Austria, and Great Britain, with a possible contingent of Swedes, scarcely outnumbered those of the French Empire, the Kingdom of Italy, and other States tributary to France. Further, it was in the power of Prussia to make or mar the success of the proposed Anglo-Russo-Swedish expedition, which, acting from Stralsund as base, was to drive the French from Hanover and Holland.

The details of the campaign of 1805 do not concern

[1] On September 17th, 1805, Pitt told George Rose (Diaries, ii., p. 198), that he was extremely hopeful on foreign politics owing to the treaties with Russia *and Prussia*. This last must be a mistake of the diarist. We had no treaty with Prussia. Lord Malmesbury (Diaries, iv., p. 339), notes that on September 26th, Pitt was "very justly sanguine" about Russia and Austria.

us here. All that we need notice is the effort of Pitt to draw Prussia into the coalition. On October 27th, Pitt and Mulgrave gave instructions to Lord Harrowby to proceed to Berlin, armed with conditions which it was thought must tempt that Government to offer its armed mediation to Napoleon in a sense favourable to the allies. He now proposed that Prussia should receive the Belgian lands up to a line drawn from Antwerp to Luxemburg; these lands were to be connected with her possessions at Wesel and in the County Mark;[1] other Belgian lands to the south-west of that line being assigned to the Elector of Salzburg, whose State, as well as the Papal Legations, was to fall to the Habsburgs. On her side England agreed to give up all conquests made from France and her allies during the present war, now excepting, however, the Cape of Good Hope; but she declined either to give up Malta or to submit her maritime code to discussion. Pitt evidently expected that Prussia would close with these offers and side with the allies in the event of her armed mediation being rejected by Napoleon. As for the military plans,

[1] Instructions of October 27th, 1805, to Lord Harrowby in "F. O.," Prussia, No. 70. This plan had been mooted in Mulgrave's despatches earlier in the year 1805, to Gower, asking him to sound the Czar's Government as to its desirability. Hardenberg in his account of Harrowby's mission ("Denkwürdigkeiten" ii., p. 353), states that that Minister offered him Holland. There is no such official offer specified in our records. The lands offered were Belgian, but Harrowby seems once to have gone beyond his instructions in order to win Prussia. The aim of the British Government was that Prussia should gain a western frontier, which should *protect* Holland. As a set-off to these gains of Prussia, Russia (it was suggested) might acquire part of Prussian Poland—as actually happened in 1815.

he hoped that the Russo-Swedish force designed for North Germany, together with Prussian, British and Hanoverian troops, would raise the allied armies in that quarter alone to 200,000 men in the following spring.

Everything, however, went wrong. Harrowby did not reach Berlin until the middle of November, and found that the ground had already been thoroughly worked. On the 24th Alopéus and Metternich, the Russian and Austrian ambassadors, showed him the secret article of the Russo-Prussian Convention of Potsdam (November 3rd) respecting Hanover. On the day before, Pitt and Mulgrave had learnt the same secret from the special Russian envoy, d'Oubril, and at once declared the cession to be quite inadmissible. A phrase in Worontzoff's despatch shows that Pitt flushed with emotion as he read the fatal document. He at once assured the Russian ambassador that he would never mention such a demand to George III., as it would lead him to break off all negotiations, and "might even place his life in danger."[1] He, however, sought to encourage Prussia to take vigorous action by again pointing out (despatch of November 23rd) the magnitude of the gains opened out to Prussia in the Belgic Netherlands, or in other German lands then held by France (evidently a hint at what is now the Rhine Province). It was in vain. The Prussian Court was bent on securing Hanover, and imagined the game to be in its hands. At Berlin the Russian and Austrian Ministers pointed out to Harrowby that the equivalents for Hanover that George III. might acquire were

[1] Czartoryski Memoirs, ii., p. 81.

"more considerable in value, and were preferable in many respects." Harrowby was as inexorable as his chief; and thus the question of the Electorate ruined the coalition in those critical days when the accession of 180,000 Prussian troops would have more than repaired the losses sustained at Ulm and Austerlitz.

Even after those two disasters Pitt did not wholly despair; for he still hoped to muster more than 200,000 troops in North Germany for the liberation of that part of Europe. Far from effecting that, our statesman early in January heard the news that Prussia forbade the advance of the Anglo-Russian forces towards Holland, and requested their withdrawal from Hanover, for whose future she herself would be responsible. That news was his death-warrant. After hearing it from Lord Hawkesbury, he said that he "suddenly felt as if he was cut in two."[1]

To all appearances Pitt closed his life amidst scenes of almost unrelieved gloom and failure. The true test of success and failure is, however, to be found in the permanence or transitoriness of a man's work; and here the verdict of history must be that Pitt's plans for the settlement of Europe were far more lasting than those of the victor of Austerlitz. In matters social and agrarian Pitt lacked the eagle ken and wondrous adjusting power of Napoleon, who curbed a Revolution and marked out the lines of the future polity of France. But the Englishman was free from the inordinate ambition which marred the Continental schemes of the great emperor. Of the many changes of boundaries which the conqueror made, how few remain to-day!

[1] Fragment from Bishop Tomline's "Life of Pitt," published by Lord Rosebery in "The Monthly Review," August, 1903.

By a strange irony of fate he consolidated the lands of his enemies, Austria and Prussia, at the time of the Secularizations. To both powers he flung bishoprics, and by the treaties of Campo Formio and Pressburg, he allowed the Habsburgs to gain Istria, Dalmatia and Salzburg. But of the annexations which he made for France and her allied States not a single one, except that of the Valtelline for Italy and a few internal changes in Switzerland, survived him. The case of Savoy and Nice is not really an exception; for those districts were practically won for France by the year 1794; and were lost during the period 1815-1859. Pitt's schemes were smaller, but many of them have been permanent. Having only feeble means and imperfect tools, he worked tentatively, until in course of time he found out the limits of the practicable in a way which the impetuous autocrat would have scorned to do.

The British statesman's method may be seen by watching the development of his plans for the Belgian lands. In 1795 he aimed at restoring them to the Habsburgs—a scheme that seemed feasible in those pre-Napoleonic days. When convinced of the inability and reluctance of that House to hold that open border land, he sought, in 1798-1799, to add it with adequate local safeguards to the Dutch Commonwealth of the future; and, had those safeguards been not only imposed but also observed, who can say that this arrangement would not have been permanent? What is certain is that the Dutch-Belgian union continued to hold the first place in British Continental policy from 1799 up to the treaties of Vienna. Obviously, when Pitt, in 1805, offered Belgium along with the lower part of the

present Rhine Province to Prussia, he did so only in order to "bid high" for her support, and lure her away from Hanover.

His death was by no means fatal to the earlier plan. In 1813-1814 our Foreign Minister, Castlereagh, insisted on its fulfilment. At the second conference of the Great Powers, held at the Congress of Châtillon on February 7th, 1814, the definite demand was made by the allies, then victoriously invading France, that she must retire within her ancient limits; in that case Great Britain would give up many of the colonial conquests made from France and Holland. This compromise took clearer form in one of the secret articles of the Treaty of Chaumont (March 9th, 1814), which stipulated that Holland must now have a suitable military frontier on the side of France. What else could this be but that of the old barrier fortresses, Mons, etc., for which Pitt had tenaciously striven in his day?

His colonial policy was also followed on two very important questions. While restoring many conquests made from the French and Dutch, Great Britain kept the two possessions—Malta and the Cape of Good Hope—which Pitt had maintained to be essential to the guarding of the overland and sea routes to India.

Some of the other territorial settlements showed the sagacity of his forecasts. His surmise of December, 1798, that Austria would seek her compensations in Italy rather than in Germany was to come only too true. She added the Milanese to the Venetian province which Bonaparte had made over to her at Campo Formio. The King of Sardinia likewise acquired the Genoese territory, as both Pitt and Czartoryski had desired; and the gain, though painful at the time to

Mazzini and all Genoese idealists, proved ultimately to be of great service to the cause of Italian unification. Prussia in 1813-1814 showed herself to be a worthy champion of Teutonic independence, and therefore naturally acquired the German lands west of the Rhine, which Pitt seemed to hold out as the reward of strenuous endeavour.

Castlereagh called the Treaty of Chaumont "my treaty." In a sense he was right. His skill and straightforwardness ended the serious differences of the allies and assured the acceptance of the British terms. But in a larger sense the treaty was Pitt's treaty. This is evident in small as well as in great matters. In 1804 Pitt named £5,000,000 as the maximum sum that Britain could possibly spare in subsidies to her allies. In 1814 Castlereagh named precisely the same sum, though Prussia had now joined their ranks. It is clear, then, that the aims, even the details, of Pitt's policy during the Second and Third Coalitions were followed at Downing Street at the time when Napoleon's wrong-headed doggedness gave the allies their decisive triumph in the campaign of 1814.

The question was much debated a few years ago, whether Pitt in his latter days cast a prophetic glance ahead and foresaw the rising of the Spaniards against Napoleon's tyranny. On that topic, as far as is known to the present writer, the British records supply no hints except of an indirect kind; and these are mainly adverse to that anecdote. In no despatch did the Foreign Office during Pitt's tenure of power base its decisions on what a later generation called the principle of nationality. This was to be expected. Statesmen take account of the needs of the time, not of nascent

principles; and it needed the mad heroism of the Spanish Rising of 1808 to show the potential force of nationality, which Canning at once determined to enrol on the British side. Pitt on the other hand limited his aims to the restoration of such States as had done well in the past. He never ceased to demand the independence of Switzerland and Holland as well as the evacuation of Italy and Germany by the French; but he never based these claims on the feelings of the peoples concerned.

The only hint that I have found in the Foreign Office despatches of any recognition of popular aspirations is in a despatch of March 22nd, 1805, from Lord Leveson-Gower, our ambassador at St. Petersburg, describing his conversation with Prince Czartoryski. The Russian Foreign Minister had urged that Piedmont might be added to the "Kingdom of Lombardy," then talked of at St. Petersburg for Joseph Bonaparte. Gower at once set forth "the impolicy as well as injustice of parcelling out countries without regard to any natural tie and relation between sovereign and subject, and added that the strong attachment of the Piedmontese to His Sardinian Majesty made it peculiarly incumbent upon us in this instance not to lose sight of this consideration." That the Polish nationalist could ever have named so artificial a scheme as the foregoing shows that statesmen had not yet begun to take nationality into account. The very word appears to have been unknown in 1805; and in that year the British Government was certainly by no means disposed to go out of its way to win back the alliance of Spain.

Pitt looked to existing needs, not to future eventualities. French domination was the outstanding fact

of his later years; and he set himself to the work of ending it. The task was unexpectedly hard because of the weakness of the neighbours of France and the obstinate jealousy of Austria and Prussia. No coalition could succeed until the border lands were hammered into firmness and the two leading German States were weaned from their mutual hostility. Napoleon's sledge-hammer methods achieved these seeming impossibilities and thus cleared the ground for the final success of Pitt's policy in 1814.

That programme has often been criticized as assigning undue importance to the principle of the balance of power. Certainly the subsidiary plan of piling up barriers against France was not permanently successful in the case of the Kingdom of the United Netherlands, though for that failure Pitt cannot rightly be blamed. The arrangements for Savoy and Nice also gave way during the bargainings between Napoleon III. and Cavour in 1859-1860. In the case of the Rhine Province, however, the barrier policy thoroughly succeeded and has largely determined the course of German and French history.

Moreover, if we view the question broadly, what other principle than the balance of power could statesmen of that age oppose to Napoleon's claim to continental supremacy? When legitimacy and all traditional claims were undermined by Rousseau's teaching as to the supremacy of Nature, and the French Emperor profitably exploited that teaching for his own aggrandizement, the champions of the older monarchies had perforce to appeal to expediency. The greatest need of mankind was peace on some lasting basis. It was clearly impossible under some federation of Euro-

pean States swayed by Napoleon. The arrangements of 1791 were equally impossible. The only thing that remained in that materialist and opportunist age was to effect a balance of forces; and the experience of Europe at the beginning of the nineteenth century, as also of the twentieth century, seems to show that, in the absence of ideal principles, a balance of power is the only lasting safeguard for the peace of Europe. By his perception of this truth, and of the means that were ultimately to conduce to its realization, Pitt rose to the level of that small and select band of statesmen who have moulded European policy far beyond the limits of their own age and of their own land.

III

THE RELIGIOUS BELIEF OF NAPOLEON [1]

THE religious belief of a great man is always of the highest interest. While his general conduct and his actions in the varying crises of life tell us much of his character, they do not reveal the whole of it. They show us all the externals of the man; but just as we remain in ignorance of his nature, even of his face, until we have looked well into his eyes, and watched how they caress a friend, or twinkle with laughter, or flash with anger, so, too, his inner being lies hidden from view until its outlook on the external is disclosed in some mood of genuine self-revelation, or amidst a disaster that strips the soul bare of every-day garniture. Such times of self-disclosure come often upon emotional and poetic natures; and the world's literature could ill spare their outcome. Other beings soar easily on the wings of ecstasy, and hold the divine to be the one reality in a world of fleeting shadows. In others, again,

> The soul grows clotted by contagion,
> Imbodies and imbrutes, till she quite lose
> The divine property of her first being.

[1] Reprinted from the "Quarterly Review" of October, 1903.

With the great mass of mankind, immersed in material facts, introspection is rare, and self-revelation is rarer. Even if the religious nature escapes the debasement denounced by our great Puritan poet, it loses the power of clear articulation, and gives forth but uncertain sounds. Hence it is often a matter of great difficulty to ascribe any definite religious beliefs to many of the world's greatest men of action. We know little or nothing of the inmost convictions of Hannibal, Caesar, and Charlemagne; the two prominent religious acts of Alexander the Great that have been recorded were certainly prompted by political motives; and the notorious fact that a state creed was looked on by a long line of Roman emperors, both pagan and Christian, as an impalpable but highly effective police force, inspired Gibbon with one of his most telling invectives against Christianity. Indeed, many of the most active rulers—Alfred the Great is a splendid exception—have not thought much about religion; they have used it. Their thought on this momentous subject has generally been in inverse ratio to the extent of their use of it as a mundane instrument.

I propose in the present article to examine the religious belief of Napoleon Bonaparte; and the thinness and vagueness of much of the evidence must be excused by the general considerations set forth above; though, on the other hand, the uncertainty which has until lately rested over this side of his life is the best justification for undertaking this inquiry in the case of so important and fascinating a personality.

In the case of a character so thickset and tenacious as that of Napoleon I., which more and more worked back into the groove of the primal instincts and family

traditions, we naturally begin by asking what were the instincts that moulded his life in the early, or Corsican, part of his career. As is well known, he came of a family which, on both sides, was of patrician rank, and he had some claim to official nobility in the paternal line. True, his father himself was not an orthodox Roman Catholic, but professed at ordinary times the Voltairean views that were then in vogue, and even wrote epigrams against the Church and its creed. The young Napoleon, however, positively disliked his father because he espoused the French cause in the strife between France and Paoli. The lad eagerly took the nationalist side, and during his earliest years mixed freely with the peasants and fishermen who formed the bulk of Paoli's following. These people were devoted Romanists; and the young Bonapartes, when they began to espouse the cause of the French Revolution, soon found out the strength of the religious instinct which was now to be ranged against them in their native island. On one occasion, in the autumn of 1790, Napoleon and his elder brother Joseph were in danger of their lives because they showed scant respect to a procession of priests and devotees who were appealing to the citizens of Ajaccio against the new anti-clerical decrees of the French National Assembly. The two young democrats barely escaped condign chastisement; and Napoleon, if not Joseph, seems always to have retained a vivid impression of the power of the orthodox creed over the Latin peoples.

Still more lasting were the impressions that he gained from his mother's training. He resembled her far more than his father; and for her "superhuman fortitude" (the phrase is his own) he ever retained the

profoundest respect. Her nature was of the primitive Corsican type, developed in the hard and penurious life of the gentry in the mountainous interior, where tradition and family honour made up the moral code; and she bequeathed her sternly practical qualities to her famous son, along with an innate respect for the religion of his race. As to the value of his mother's training he bore frequent testimony. At St. Helena he remarked to the Countess Montholon: "The first principles that one receives from one's parents, and that one takes in along with mother's milk, leave an ineffaceable imprint." The words, as will presently appear, have a practical bearing on the final stages of our inquiry. Meanwhile, we note that from his parents he inherited very diverse tendencies. His father bequeathed to him the speculative faculties that enabled him to wander at ease among systems of philosophy, and to frame grandiose political schemes; while from his mother he had that strongly practical bent which ever drove him to look closely at facts, and to assess them at their inmost value in relation to the needs of life. The instincts implanted by her training were never lost. Méneval, in his "Souvenirs" (iii., 114), relates that Napoleon, when emperor, frequently made the sign of the cross, quite involuntarily, at the news of any great danger or deliverance.

But the laws of heredity, which explain so much in the life of an ordinary man, never unravel the inner mysteries of the life of a genius. So original a being as Napoleon early outleaped all the possibilities that seemed to await the son of the dilettante Corsican lawyer, and of his uninformed spouse. The whirlwind of the French Revolution caught him away from

insular hopes and ambitions—he had hoped to free Corsica from the French—and opened up the career that was to astonish mankind. It would be an error to say that it rooted up his religious faith, for there is very slight proof as to religion having had any vital hold on him, even in his earlier years. Sent to the military school at Brienne at the age of ten, he led an unhappy, moody existence there under the superintendence of monks whom he detested; and his life at the Ecole Militaire in Paris (1784-85) was no more conducive to the growth of faith than his sojourn at Brienne. In later years he is said to have remarked that the happiest day of his life was that of his first communion, which he received on his birthday during this sojourn at Paris. The pleasing effect which the sound of village bells always had upon him has also been referred to the happy associations which they conjured up. However that may be, the fact is certain that his letters written at Brienne reveal no religious sentiment. The most noteworthy expression is that in which he thanks God, "le grand moteur des choses humaines," for having fitted him for the finest of all careers, that of a soldier. Equally noteworthy is his later reference to his sturdy defence of his own little arbour against the assaults of his school-fellows on the festival of St. Louis: "Yes, I had the instinct that my will was to prevail over that of others, and that what pleased me must belong to me."[1]

This unyielding egotism, which embittered his school-life, gained new strength from a study of Rousseau, whose geometrical designs for the creation of a

[1] Chuquet, "La Jeunesse de Napoléon" (Brienne), p. 124.

perfect polity appealed to the methodizing instincts of the young officer and drew him for many years far away from Christianity. During his sojourn at Valence and Auxonne we find him eagerly studying history to buttress his favourite theories; and in his voluminous note-books written at that time (1785-87) we find the manuscript of his first controversial work. In it he made a fierce onslaught on a Protestant pastor of Geneva who had successfully criticized the statement at the close of Rousseau's "Social Contract," that Christiantity broke up the harmony and order of civil society, and enjoined servitude. Bonaparte took up the cudgels on behalf of his then favourite author, affirming that the Christian creed was hostile to a perfect polity; for, by bidding men look forward to another life, it rendered them too submissive to the evils of the present. Nor would he allow any merit to Protestantism; for, he maintained, by encouraging individual liberty of thought it broke up the unity of society, and was the fertile source of schisms and civil wars.

The essay is remarkable for vehemence of expression, which consorted somewhat ill with the rigidly mechanical views of life that the author advocated. In his view civil government should aim at securing a general uniformity of life, both in the spheres of moral and material well-being. It must "lend assistance to the feeble against the strong, and by this means allow every one to enjoy a sweet tranquillity the road of happiness." In brief, he declared himself for the perfecting of society by external means alone. Human welfare could be attained by the State, the aid of religion being superfluous, if not actually harm-

ful. Such was his creed at the age of eighteen, and such it was long to remain. This explains his friendship with the younger Robespierre, and his admiration for the Terrorist chief. Their political and ethical creeds were practically identical.

The downfall of the Robespierres and the strange vicissitudes of his own career shook his faith in the efficacy of this levelling creed, and left him for a time weary and disenchanted. "Life is but a light dream, which soon vanishes"—so he wrote to his brother Joseph on June 24th, 1795; and again he remarked that soon he would not move aside to avoid a carriage. The luxury and dissipation of Paris aroused in him a contempt for his kind that he was never wholly to lose. The death of two enthusiasms—the first, that on behalf of Corsica; the second, that which aimed at the ideals of Lycurgus—left him morally rudderless; and an incident in the first part of his warfare on the Italian frontier shows him to have already thrown all scruples to the winds. While walking one day along the French positions at the Col di Tenda with his mistress, the wife of one of the French commissioners, he bethought him that she would like to see an engagement. He therefore ordered an attack, which he thus described to Las Cases at St. Helena:

"We won, it is true, but the fight could, of course, end in nothing. It was a pure fancy on my part; but, for all that, some few men were left on the ground. Whenever I have since thought of that I have always reproached myself for my conduct."[1]

After this admission it is needless to inquire whether

[1] Las Cases, "Mémorial de Ste.-Hélène," vol. i., p. 180.

religious principles had any sway over him in the years of disillusionment that followed on the collapse of his political ideals.

His invasion of Italy in 1796-97 brought him into close contact with the Papacy; and his observation of the real power which religion exerted in the Peninsula seems to have reawakened his respect for the creed of his childhood. At any rate, though he was ordered by the Directory, then dominant at Paris, to uproot the Pope's authority, he constantly evaded the task. Indeed, he urged very different conduct on the French envoy at the Eternal City. Thus, on October 28th, 1796, he wrote:

"I covet the title of saviour, far more than that of destroyer of the Holy See. You are yourself aware that we have always held the same principles in this matter; and if they will only be wise at Rome, we will take advantage of the unlimited power conferred on me by the Directory to give peace to this fair portion of the world, and quiet the alarmed consciences of many nations."

Unfortunately, the effect of this letter, which might have come from a veritable *dévot*, is marred by one written four days earlier to the same envoy, in which Bonaparte told him that the great thing was to gain time, so that, when the French were ready to invade the Papal States in force, they might secure the important seaport of Ancona. "In short, the finesse of the game is for us to throw the ball from one to the other, so as to amuse the old fox." The young conqueror was, however, careful to give the impression that the Roman Church would gain far better terms from him than from the Directory; but his friendship

was bought somewhat dearly at the price of a heavy ransom and one hundred works of art, to be selected at Rome, to adorn the museums of Paris.[1]

Amidst all these opportunist devices we catch glimpses of his respect for the Church as a great governing power. He discovered this power even in the first of the self-governing republics which he erected in the north of Italy; he complained that, during his absence, the elections had gone almost wholly for the clerical party, and that, too, in districts which had of late cast off the rule of the Pope's legates. He therefore held the balance level in religious matters, curbing the clericals, but repressing the silly excesses of which the Italian Jacobins were guilty against the Church.[2] Now that he was charged with the administration of large areas in Italy, he sought to bring over the bishops to his side; and the following letter to the Bishop of Como (May 6th, 1797), shows his complete emancipation from the anti-Christian fervour of his youth.

"Never throw oil, but throw water, on the passions of men; scatter prejudices, and firmly strive against the false priests who have degraded religion by making it

[1] [Equally materialist is the tone of his letter to the Directory, dated February 15, 1797, from Ancona, in which he states that he is about to forward the spoils of the shrine of Loretto, along with the Madonna. He significantly adds—"La Madone est de bois."]

[2] At Milan, in the spring of 1796, the statue of St. Ambrose had been cast down and dragged through the streets. Profane literature deluged the Lombard cities for a time. Some of the churches were turned into Jacobin clubs, and a patriotic liturgy and *Credo* were recited. The last began: "I believe in the French Republic, and in its son, General Bonaparte." These excesses soon led to the inevitable reaction.

the tool of the ambition of the powerful and of kings. The morality of the Gospel is that of equality, and henceforth it is most favourable to the republican government which is now to be that of your country." ("Correspondence," No. 1770.)

And when the Archbishop of Genoa had recommended submission to the new French and democratic constitution, he received this glowing eulogy (September 10th, 1797):

"I have just received, citizen, your pastoral of September 5; I thought I heard one of the twelve apostles speak. It is thus that St. Paul spoke. How religion inspires esteem when she has ministers like you! True apostle of the Gospel, you inspire respect; you oblige your enemies to esteem and admire you; you even convert the unbeliever." (Ib. No. 2182.)

In less than a year Bonaparte was proclaiming (July 2nd, 1798) to the people of Egypt that the French had come as their friends and allies; that they had overthrown the Pope, who said men ought to make war on the Moslems; and had destroyed the Knights of Malta

"because those madmen believed that God desired war with the Moslems. Have we not for centuries been the friends of the Grand Signor (may God accomplish his desires) and the enemy of his enemies?" ("Correspondence," No. 2723.)

It is needless to follow Bonaparte through the marvellously clever shifts adopted for the purpose of cajoling the Moslems in Egypt and the Christians of the Lebanon in turn. It is of interest to remember that this last

effort, during the siege of Acre, was partly foiled by Sir Sidney Smith distributing among those Christians copies of Bonaparte's Moslem proclamations to the Egyptians.

The Egyptian expedition was little more than a dramatic interlude in Bonaparte's career, designed to fill an interval until the Directory should collapse from internal weakness, and from the difficulties in which its rashness had involved it. On his return to France he found that "the pear was ripe"; and prominent among the causes that made for change was the nagging anti-clerical policy of the government. As soon as the popular general had overthrown the Directory he sought to base his power as First Consul on a general pacification. The brave Vendéan peasants were coaxed to surrender largely through the instrumentality of a democratic priest, Bernier; and the same man was entrusted with the overtures for a reconciliation with the Papacy, the temporal power of which had been restored by the second coalition. Into the complex negotiations that finally led to the signing of the Concordat of 1801-02 it is, of course, impossible to enter; but the reasons with which Napoleon justified, in the face of France and the world, this most momentous change in republican policy are very noteworthy. With characteristic boldness he defied the infidel sentiments of his army and of France in an allocution to the clergy of Milan, just nine days before the battle of Marengo established his power. After remarking that philosophers had striven to persuade France that Catholicism must always be hostile to liberty, and that this was the cause of the cruel and foolish persecution of religion during the Revolution he continued:

"Experience has undeceived the French, and has convinced them that the Catholic religion is better adapted than any other to diverse forms of government, and is particularly favourable to republican institutions. I myself am a philosopher, and I know that, in every society whatsoever, no man is considered just and virtuous who does not know whence he came and whither he is going. Simple reason cannot guide you in this matter; without religion one walks continually in darkness; and the Catholic religion alone gives to man certain and infallible information concerning his origin and his latter end."

The identification of virtue with exact knowledge of a very metaphysical problem is here asserted with a boldness which would have startled the Socrates of the Dialogues of Plato. But there is no need to take the statement as more than a rhetorical platitude which would please the classical scholars there present. The argument that a man ought to seek to know whence he comes, what he is, and whither he is going, was frequently on Bonaparte's lips, and often served him in defence of religion. There is, indeed, every reason to think that the Socratic maxim, "Know thyself," genuinely interested him. In fact, this intensely practical man, as he once described himself, longed for certainty in all things. During the course of his life he came more and more to dislike change, whether in matters social, political, or purely personal. He carried this last foible so far as to keep the same people about him, presumably because the coming of new persons gave him the trouble of fathoming their natures and finding out what their inmost feelings towards him really were. Speculative in his youth, in obedience to the paternal strain in his nature, he ransacked systems

and creeds in the craving for fixity of belief, which we may trace to the tough fibre of his mother's kin. Rousseau's dogmatism satisfied him for a time; but his contact with the primitive society of the East shattered his belief in the perfect polity set forth as attainable in the "Social Contract." That creed had long been on the wane; and he subsequently avowed that it was the sight of savage man as he really was which finally cured him of Rousseauism. "Savage man is a dog," he exclaimed with his usual incisive curtness.

That belief having gone, he had to choose, as virtual ruler of France, between Catholicism, Protestantism, the Theophilanthropy of La Révellière-Lépeaux, and mere irreligion. The various creeds are said by Thibaudeau to have claimed the following totals of adherents in France: Catholics, 15,000,000; Protestants, Jews, and Theophilanthropists, 3,000,000; while 17,000,000 were reckoned as infidels. The last total is probably too high; but it was clearly open to Bonaparte to continue the irreligious *régime* of the Directory. He declined, however, for reasons that will now appear. The Theophilanthropists numbered about a million; their creed, a quaint mixture of the worship of Reason with an ethical cult and liturgy devised by the fallen Director, was already on the wane; and Bonaparte dealt it a death-blow by refusing to its votaries the use of any churches, on the ground that it was not a religion at all.

"'What is your Theophilanthropy?' he said to one of them. 'Oh, don't talk to me of a religion which only takes me for this life without telling me whence I come or whither I go.'"

This argument in favour of religious dogma acquires

added interest from the fact that the young Comte was then beginning his education at Paris, and must have heard of the expiring efforts of the Theophilanthropists to hold their ground against the religious positivism of Bonaparte.

The Protestant creed never had any charms for him. He is reported to have expressed his regret, at a later time, that he did not make France Protestant, but the expression can have been nothing more than an outburst of spleen against the unyielding attitude of the Roman Church towards his claim of absolute supremacy. There is nothing in his writings, early or late, to show that he ever had the slightest regard for the Protestant principle of the right of private judgement, which ran counter to all his ideas of the solidarity of the State. His boyish tirade against the pastor of Geneva represents his attitude all through his life. At St. Helena he told General and Madame de Montholon, with convincing *naïveté*, why he had not chosen to make France Protestant in 1800. If he threw in his lot with the Church of Rome there was a good chance of his having a solid and obedient nation at his back. If he declared for Protestantism, there would at once have been two or more great parties.

"'These parties, by tearing one another to pieces, would have annihilated France, and would have made her the slave of Europe, when my ambition was to make her mistress of Europe. With the aid of Catholicism I should more easily attain all my great results. Abroad, Catholicism would keep the Pope on my side; and with my influence, and our forces in Italy, I did not despair of having, sooner or later, by one means or another, the direction of this Pope. And thenceforth, what an influence! What a lever of opinion for the

rest of the world! Never in all my quarrels with the Pope have I touched a dogma.'"[1]

Nowhere else did Napoleon ever state so simply and baldly the reasons for his rejecting Protestantism and founding his rule on Catholicism. True, he added that he naturally clung to the faith of his childhood; but it is no outrageous cynicism to hold that the political reasoning stated above prevailed over sentimental motives. After the brilliant triumphs of 1796, he based his behaviour on the lines laid down in his famous letter of October 7th, 1797, to Talleyrand:

"It is only with prudence, wisdom, and great dexterity that obstacles are surmounted and important ends attained. If we take as the basis for all operations true policy, which is nothing else than the calculation of combinations and chances, we shall long remain *la grande nation*, the arbiter of Europe."

There spake the greatest player of political chess that the world has ever seen, for whom the world was the board, and monarchs and nations merely pieces in the game. With his usual proneness to material measurement, he even assessed the Pope's influence by military standards. "Treat with the Pope," he wrote to the French minister at Rome, "as if he had 200,000 men."

[1] La Comtesse de Montholon's "Souvenirs de Ste.-Hélène," (Paris, 1901), Appendix II. This appendix consists of notes, previously unpublished, made by Montholon for his "Récits de la Captivité de Napoléon." They are taken from a *cahier* in the possession of Vicomte de Couëdic. [See, too, Chaptal, "Mes Souvenirs sur Napoléon," p. 237, as to his sense of the value of religious devotion in the case of the Czar, and of the Sultan.]

Why then did Napoleon quarrel with the Pope in and after the year 1809? Why did he condone his arrest and deportation from Rome? The story is a long one. He always gave out that those acts were due to a mistake of General Miollis; but, he added, "what is done is done"; and, on the whole, Pius VII. had better go to Savona. It would seem, however, that he had long resolved to wield the temporal power himself. In August 1806 he had written that Italy must be his, and the Pope his vassal. In July 1807 Pius VII. was to be reminded of Christ's words, that His kingdom was not of this world. Why then did the successor of Peter set himself above Christ? Finally, when the Pope was a prisoner, he stated that the temporal power was gone for ever. In fact he judged that he no longer needed the support of the Papacy. When the papal nuncio read out to him the bull of excommunication after the battle of Essling, he said courteously: "You have done your duty; you are a very brave man; I esteem you." Then, on re-reading the document, he said: "What can the Pope do? I have 300,000 men under my orders. With his lightning can he make the arms fall from my soldiers' hands?"

His sense of the value of papal support therefore rested ultimately on a material basis. Not until his power was tottering to its fall, early in 1814, did he think of restoring the Pope to liberty and sending him to Rome. "Let him burst on that place," he said, "like a bomb-shell."[1] It is not surprising that devout historians should see in this unworthy treatment of a delicate old man a chief cause of the Emperor's fall, just

[1] Lecestre, "Lettres inédites de Napoléon I.," January 21st, 1814.

as they point to the miseries of the retreat from Moscow as proof of the efficacy of the papal thunderbolts.[1]

His attitude towards religion, then, was at bottom determined by political considerations. True, he attended mass on suitable occasions, and preserved there an outward decorum which contrasted well with the levity that disgraced the Court of France, even in the time of Louis XVI.; but it was a political function, in which he did honour to his "sacred *gendarmerie*." If the clergy opposed him, he at once curbed their prerogatives, dismissing refractory bishops and priests, and even forbidding the publication of "any work on ecclesiastical affairs."[2]

But if this methodizing genius fenced in the Church, much more severely did he gag her opponents. Protestants were attached to the State by a well-devised system, but infidels were promptly silenced. Eleven days after the mighty blow of Austerlitz consolidated Napoleon's power, he sent a missive from the palace of Schönbrunn, sharply rebuking a M. Lalande, who had ventured to air very heterodox opinions in the august circle of the Institute of France. Affecting to pity this once learned man, who had evidently fallen into dotage, and now spoke only in order to be talked about, the Emperor declared that he disgraced both himself and that learned body by professing atheism —"a principle destructive of all social organization in that it takes from man all his consolations and hopes."

[1] De Beauterne, "Sentiment de Napoléon sur le Christianisme," cap. iv.

[2] Lecestre, "Lettres inédites," July 19th, 1811. A large number of these letters excluded from the "official" correspondence, deal with church affairs.

The Institute must therefore officially warn the offender never again to publish anything of such a nature as to overcloud the memory of his earlier services. If those fraternal admonitions failed, it would be the Emperor's duty to prevent the destruction of the morality of his people, "for atheism destroys all morality, if not in individuals, yet assuredly in nations." His inmost feelings on this subject were stated to Roederer, not long after Brumaire, with the frankness that he often showed towards that clever man and agreeable talker.

"'How can morality exist?' said he. 'There is only one means—that of re-establishing religion.... Society cannot exist without inequality of fortunes, and inequality of fortunes cannot exist without religion. When one man is dying of hunger near another who suffers from surfeit, he cannot resign himself to this difference unless there is an authority that can say to him, 'God wills it so; there must be rich and poor in this world; but hereafter, and for ever, their lot will be different.'"[1]

The crude materialism of this argument, coinciding as it does with so many other characteristics of Napoleon's policy in the days of his power, absolves us from the task of further inquiry as to the wholeheartedness of his devotion either to the dogmas of Rome or to the teachings of Christ. But the passionate assertions of many devout souls, that in his days of misfortune at St. Helena he became a convinced believer, call for a careful investigation. The stories on this topic have certainly a great charm and some traits of verisimilitude. The most famous of them is that in which Napoleon is described as pouring forth a "torrent

[1] Roederer, "Œuvres," iii. 335.

of eloquence" (to use Lacordaire's epithet) on the subject of the enduring majesty of Christ's kingdom, as contrasted with the passing pomp of merely human conquerors. The first version of this incident is worth quoting, if only because it inspired Lacordaire, Newman,[1] and finally, Canon Liddon, with some of their noblest periods. After long arguments against paganism, and the systems of Lycurgus and Confucius, the Emperor is reported as saying:

"It is not the same with Christ. Everything in him astonishes me: his spirit soars above mine, and his will confounds me. Between him and every other person in the world no comparison is possible. He is truly a being apart from all. His ideas and his sentiments, the truth that he announces, his manner of convincing one, are not to be explained either by human organization or by the nature of things. His birth and the history of his life, the profundity of his dogma, which touches the height of all difficulties and yet is their most admirable solution, his Gospel, the singularity of this mysterious being, his apparition, his empire, his march across centuries and realms—all is to me a prodigy, an unfathomable mystery that plunges me in a reverie from which I cannot escape, a mystery that is under my eyes and endures, which I can neither deny nor explain. I see nothing of the human in this. . . . Nations perish; thrones fall; the Church alone endures. . . . I have inspired multitudes of men who died for me. Certainly I possess the secret of this magical power which exalts the spirit, but I could not communicate it to any one; not one of my generals has received or divined it from me; no more have I the secret of immortalizing my name and the love of

[1] Cardinal Newman, "Sermons Preached on Various Occasions" (1858), p. 57.

me in men's hearts, and of working miracles without the help of matter. Now that I am nailed to this rock, who fights and conquers empires for me? . . . Where are my friends? Yes, there are two or three of you, immortalized by your faithfulness; you share and console my exile. . . . Such is the destiny of great men. Murdered by the English oligarchy, I am dying before my time, and my corpse will be given back to the earth to become food for worms. What an abyss of distance between my misery and the eternal reign of Christ—preached, incensed, loved, adored, living through all the world. Is that death? Is it not rather life? Such is the death of Christ. It is that of God." (De Beauterne, cap. v.)

Let us examine the evidence as to the authenticity of this remarkable monologue. It occurs in a little work published in 1840 by the Chevalier de Beauterne, entitled, "Sentiment de Napoléon sur le Christianisme." A second edition with additions and alterations was brought out in 1864 by M. Bouniol, who states that the former editor had gained most of his information from Count Montholon. De Beauterne himself had regretfully admitted that he received little or no help from the other companions of Napoleon's exile. From Las Cases he had received "a singular letter which is not calculated to give a great idea of his penetration, if it honours his conscientiousness": but he consoled himself with the thought that Las Cases was so short a time at St. Helena that he can have had only a superficial knowledge of his master. General Bertrand also had been uncommunicative; Gourgaud had promised some "precious documents" on the subject of his master's religion, but did not send them. From a M. Olivier, de Beauterne had a long account of a conversation with

Cardinal Fesch, Napoleon's uncle, in which Fesch asserted that the whole of the Emperor's life had been religious, a fact which was apparent in all his works; that he had been tempted by an emissary of Pitt in 1802 with the prospect of a splendid peace with England if he would make France Protestant; and that the Czar had held out the same prospects on the raft at Tilsit if he (Napoleon) would embrace the Greek faith.

These and other silly stories at the beginning of the book give us a poor idea of de Beauterne's critical powers. After other historical and biographical details of the same stamp, we come to the famous monologue from which extracts are given above. It covers no less than thirty-three closely printed pages, and is cited as having been spoken at one time. M. Bouniol, however, assures us that it represents thoughts uttered on several occasions to Napoleon's interlocutors. The presence of these is nowhere visible except in this final touch:

"The Emperor became silent, and, as General Bertrand remained equally still, he resumed: 'If you do not understand that Jesus Christ is God, well—I was wrong in making you a general.'"

This finale has the true Napoleonic ring; but the monologue as a whole, though it contains powerful and original passages, does not strike the careful student of Napoleon's acts and sayings as representing his inmost thoughts on religion. The long period (too long for quotation) in which he is made to inveigh against Mohammed as an impostor, and as author of a creed that panders to man's evil passions, is in flagrant contradiction to the many passages, quoted by more cred-

ible authorities, in which he spoke with admiration of the prophet of the East, and of his faith as "simpler and more adapted to their morality than ours."[1] Other statements, which represent him as citing the mystery of religion as proof of its divinity, flatly oppose everything that we know of his longing for the tangible and the demonstrable. "In literature," says the Comtesse de Montholon, "he liked simplicity, the true and *naïf* description of feelings." The same was true of his taste in matters philosophical. Voltaire was his favourite writer—a choice which harmonizes ill with the ecstasy of devotion that de Beauterne attributes to him.

This monologue, then, must be pronounced suspect on internal grounds. The external evidence in its favour is also very weak. De Beauterne's book appeared in 1840, the very time when Montholon, its presumed compiler, was working hard for Louis Napoleon, whose chief of staff he became in the futile attempt at Boulogne. The false and venomous reference to England at its close, and the effort everywhere apparent, to glorify the Roman Church, render it suspiciously like one of the many pamphlets that were put forth to aid the Pretender's cause. Montholon, it is true, was incapable of writing that religious dissertation, which, viewed in the abstract, is so admirable in many ways. It is probable that he had clerical help in working up some of his St. Helena notes; and the result took the form of the eloquent manifesto, which, through the medium of Lacordaire and John Henry Newman, has gained world-wide repute.

We now have before us some of Montholon's notes

[1] Gourgaud, "Journal," i., 454; ii., 77, 272; Las Cases, "Mémorial," iv., 124.

in their first form. The most remarkable passage on the subject of religion is the following report of Napoleon's remarks in conversation one evening—date not specified:

"'Everything proclaims the existence of God: it cannot be doubted. As soon as I had power I made haste to restore religion. I made use of it as the basis and root; it was in my eyes the support of morality, true principles, and good manners. The restlessness of man is such that he must have this vague and mysterious element that religion presents to him.' Some one having remarked that he [Napoleon] might finally become a devout man, the Emperor replied that he feared not, but that with him unbelief sprang neither from caprice nor from an unbridled spirit. 'Man,' he added, 'ought to asseverate about nothing, especially about what concerns his last moments. . . . To say whence I come, what I am, whither I am going, is beyond my thoughts, and yet the thing exists. I am the watch which exists and does not know itself. The religious sentiment is so consoling that it is a heavenly boon to possess it.'"[1]

And on another occasion he said:

"One believes in God because everything around us proclaims him, and the greatest minds have believed in him—not only Bossuet, but Newton and Leibnitz. Such, literally, has been the case with me in the progress of my mind. I felt the need of belief, and I believed. But my belief was uncertain after I reasoned. Perhaps I shall believe blindly once again. God grant it. I do not offer resistance—assuredly not; I do not

[1] Comtesse de Montholon's "Souvenirs de Ste.-Hélène," Appendix I.

ask for anything better. . . . I have never doubted about God."[1]

If we are to trust Gourgaud's "Journal," Napoleon's theism was very often clouded with doubts; and every external circumstance invests Gourgaud's notes with a higher credibility than pertains to those of Montholon. For, in the first place, he was a far more truthful man than Montholon; indeed, he was the only one of Napoleon's four companions whose word, if uncorroborated, counts for much. Secondly, he noted down Napoleon's conversations day by day, following them through their varying moods with Boswellian fidelity, and adding occasionally his own remarks and criticisms in a way that shows his own *naïveté* and the lack of the set Bonapartist design which mars the works of Las Cases and Montholon. And yet Gourgaud is not wholly to be trusted on some topics, probably including that of religion. His frankness and his whimsical moods often annoyed the Emperor, who took his revenge by nagging at him, and finally seems to have worked so as to drive him from the island. Now Gourgaud was a *dévot*, perhaps he was even an orthodox Catholic; and one of the Emperor's ways of teasing him was to wound his religious feelings.

This, we think, explains the frequency with which this topic recurs in Gourgaud's "Journal." Once the Emperor scandalized his faithful squire by reading the Bible with a map, and declaring that he intended to write a history of the campaigns of Moses. Frequently

[1] Comtesse de Montholon's "Souvenirs de Ste.-Hélène," Appendix II. [Chaptal, "Mes Souvenirs sur Napoleon," p. 236, asserts that Napoleon always believed in the existence of God, and in the immortality of the soul.]

he vaunted the superiority of Mohammedanism over Christianity; it was simpler: "God is great and Mohammed is his prophet," was its fundamental creed. Moreover, the *imaums* in Egypt had often worsted him by declaring that Christians believed in three gods, and were therefore pagans. Then again, Mohammed conquered half the world in ten years, a feat which cost Christianity three centuries of struggle.[1] Sometimes he went the length of declaring that all religions were the work of man, and on some dozen occasions he professed a thoroughgoing materialism, alleging that Monge, Berthollet, and Laplace held materialistic views.

"I believe that man has been produced by the clay warmed by the sun, and combined with electric fluids. What are animals, an ox, for example, if not organic matter? . . . Nevertheless, the idea of God is the simplest. Who has made all that? . . . Do soldiers believe in God? They see the dead fall so fast around them."

Montholon then suggested that they should have a chaplain to amuse them. Gourgaud protested against the profanity of the motive urged; and Napoleon cut short the discussion by saying that he had other things to think about.[2] It is interesting to compare this with the calumny which de Beauterne gave to the world in 1840, that the British government withheld a priest from them until the Pope intervened.

With regard to the divinity of Christ, not a word was said by Napoleon to Gourgaud showing that he

[1] Gourgaud, "Journal," i., 454; ii., 78, 272, etc.
[2] *Ibid.*, i., p. 440.

held that central belief. Of the seven entries in Gourgaud's "Journal" on this theme, at least three represent Napoleon as altogether an unbeliever. Twice he expressed a doubt whether Jesus ever existed; and on all occasions he spoke of him in much the same terms that he applied to Mohammed or Plato. True, Gourgaud was at St. Helena for only half the period of Napoleon's exile; but during the twenty-eight months of his stay he saw his master constantly and reported his words minutely. It seems impossible, then, to set aside his testimony on the ground that Napoleon often teased him on religious subjects.[1] Variable on many subjects, the Napoleon of Gourgaud showed no appreciable variation with regard to the divinity of Christ. If, then, the Emperor used the famous words reported by de Beauterne—"Je connais les hommes, et je vous dis que Jésus Christ n'est pas homme"—his opinions underwent a complete change in the last years.

Are there grounds for believing that such a change came over him as he once said he would welcome? The evidence on this subject is obscure. Montholon and Bertrand were then almost openly irreligious; the Countess de Montholon left for Europe in July, 1819; and the Countess Bertrand, who remained, was disliked by the Emperor. Two priests, Buonavita and Vignali, arrived in September 1819; the former of these returned almost at once; Vignali, though far

[1] Before Gourgaud left the island he was some weeks with Captain Basil Jackson, who, in his work, "Notes and Reminiscences of a Staff Officer" (1903), set forth Gourgaud's conviction that Napoleon was a materialist. Glover, the secretary of Admiral Cockburn on the "Northumberland," thought Napoleon an "atheist." ("Napoleon's Last Voyages," p. 197.)

from being the ignorant man he has often been described (for he had studied medicine and philosophy at Rome, and had recently taken the degrees of Ph.D. and M.D.), never won the great man's confidence. Moreover he was assassinated not long after his return to Corsica in 1821. There is therefore little left but the gossip of physicians, valets, or the commissioners of the Powers, the later lucubrations of Montholon, the evidence supplied by Napoleon's will, and the directions which he left for his son. Some doubt even rests on the question whether extreme unction was administered to the dying man. Montholon, on his return to Europe, affirmed this to Lord Holland, but declared that Vignali had orders to say that it was administered solely on his (Montholon's) responsibility.[1] Vignali was certainly left alone with the sufferer, and doubtless performed the solemn rite; but why so much mystery should have been thrown around the matter it is hard to say; except on the supposition that, even in his dying hours, Napoleon wished to fence with the judgement of posterity.

Scarcely more convincing are the references to religious and ethical subjects in his will, and in the political testament intended for the Duc de Reichstadt. To his son he bequeathed none of those fervent injunctions as to the forgiveness of enemies which Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette in their last hours impressed on the hapless dauphin. Napoleon merely warned his son that religion had a power far greater than certain narrow-minded philosophers would allow, and that it was "capable of rendering great services to humanity.

[1] Lord Holland's "Foreign Reminiscences," p. 316. See, too, Essay XII. in this volume, p. 341.

By standing well with the Pope, an influence can be maintained over the consciences of a hundred million people.[1] One would have expected something more inspiring than this from the hand of a convinced Christian when giving his last advice to his only child.

The third clause of Napoleon's will is certainly remarkable for the pardon which it proclaimed towards one who had deeply wronged him.

"I have always had reason to be well pleased with my very dear wife, Marie Louise. I preserve towards her to my last moments the most tender sentiments; I pray her to take heed so as to keep my son from the snares which still surround his infancy."

Seeing that he knew her to have long been living in adultery with "ce polisson de Neipperg," the passage is remarkable; but he always maintained that she "was innocence itself," and that circumstances had been too much for her.[2] His conduct towards her, as earlier towards Josephine, shows him to have been forgiving and indulgent towards a crime which must have wounded every instinct of personal and family honour, specially strong in a Corsican. The will also testifies to his generosity of heart towards those who had helped and befriended him in his early days, as in his exile. But its references to political opponents are of a very different order. Reverting to his execution of the Duc d'Enghien, he defends it as needful for the safety, interest, and honour of the French people, and declares that in similar circumstances he

[1] Montholon, "Captivité de Napoléon," vol. iii., ch. 6.

[2] Gourgaud, ii., 330, where Napoleon contrasts her with Josephine.

would repeat the action. Efforts have been made to explain away this clause as the result of a sudden access of irritation. But it exactly coincides with his opinion on this affair expressed to Admiral Cockburn on the voyage to St. Helena,[1] and must therefore be considered, not as the outburst of an invalid, but as a last deliberate defiance to the judgement of the world on that outrage.

Still worse, perhaps, is the fifth clause of the fourth and last codicil, dated April 24th, 1821, by which he left ten thousand francs to a junior French officer, Cantillon, for seeking to stab Wellington in Paris. True, the would-be murderer had been acquitted by a Paris jury, but that fact evidently weighed little with Napoleon, who declared that Cantillon had as much right to murder the oligarch as the latter had to send him to St. Helena. He further accused the Duke of having violated the capitulation of Paris, thereby becoming "responsible for the blood of the martyrs, Ney, La Bédoyère, etc., and for the crime of having despoiled the museums contrary to the text of treaties." Napoleon must have known the falsity of all these charges against Wellington; and it is for ever regrettable that he soiled his fame by handing down to posterity, in the last document but one that he ever dictated (for the passage about the Duc d'Enghien was perhaps the last), three deliberate falsehoods as a justification for rewarding an attempt at murder.

On the same moral plane is the statement in the will itself: "I die prematurely, murdered by the English oligarchy and its assassin (*sicaire*): the English

[1] "Extract from a Diary of Rear-Admiral Sir George Cockburn," p. 94 (London, 1888).

people will not be slow to avenge me." On the day when these words were written (April 15th), he knew that he was dying of cancer, the disease which carried off his father; the attentions of Dr. Arnott, who had been expressly sent by Sir Hudson Lowe, were at that time far more effectual than those of Antommarchi, Napoleon's own doctor; and the patient recognized the fact, finally urging Bertrand and Montholon to effect a reconciliation with the Governor. The venomous phrase in the will must therefore be interpreted in the light of that significant declaration to Gourgaud which must be quoted in French:

"Ici, quoi qu'on dise, je puis faire, comme il me plaît, la réputation du gouverneur. Tout ce que je dirai contre lui, de ses mauvais traitements, de ses idées d'empoisonnement, sera cru." ("Journal," ii., 414.)

The will was the final stab at Sir Hudson Lowe.

It is hard to reconcile the last authenticated words of Napoleon with any heartfelt belief in Christianity. The probability would seem to be that he wavered between materialism and theism, inclining more and more to the latter belief as the years wore on, but never feeling for religion the keen interest that he always manifested for the arts of war and of government. Richly gifted as he was in all that pertained to the life of action, and by no means lacking originality and taste in the spheres of philosophy and literature, his nature was singularly barren on the side of religion. His best certified utterances on this topic are those of the politician rather than of the believer. In his active life he came to look on religion as the useful handmaid of the ruler; and his neglect of its real mission

to the individual developed in him that hardness which was to be his bane as Emperor and his misfortune in exile. "I repeat to you" (he said to Gourgaud on the occasion last cited) "that you will strike your head against the rock, and that rock is myself."

IV

EGYPT DURING THE FIRST BRITISH OCCUPATION

IN our Foreign Office Archives (Turkey, No. 36) I have found what is probably the first description of the condition of Egypt penned by a British official. It bears the date July 2nd, 1802, is addressed to the Earl of Elgin, then our ambassador at Constantinople, and is signed by William Hamilton. At first sight one naturally concludes that this must be our ambassador at Naples, husband of the still more famous "Emma," for he did much in his day to forward the study of Archaeology, and enriched the British Museum by many gifts of manuscripts and curios. But the writer was not that indulgent envoy; neither was he the other celebrated William Hamilton, the philosopher; he was Lord Elgin's secretary.

The British public, however, owes him a larger debt of gratitude than it is aware of; for during the negotiations of September, 1801, respecting the surrender of the French Army of Egypt to our forces commanded by General Sir John Hely Hutchinson (successor to the lamented Abercrombie), Mr. Hamilton rendered signal service in helping to secure for this country the antiquities which now form so valuable a portion of the Egyptian collection in the British Museum. Hutchin-

son had carefully stipulated in Article 14 of the Capitulation agreed upon with the French Commander-in-Chief, General Menou (August 30th, 1801), that: "The members of the [French] Institute may carry away with them all the instruments of arts and science which they have brought from France; but the Arabian manuscripts, the statues and other collections, which have been made for the French Republic, shall be considered as public property, and subject to the disposal of the generals of the combined army [of Great Britain and Turkey]."[1] Nevertheless, there was a vast amount of haggling over details, and we now know from the recently published letters of Menou that on Hamilton fell most of the work of proving that huge statues and precious manuscripts were not, and could not be, the private property of the agonized *savants* who clung to them. On the day after the signing of the Articles of Capitulation, Menou wrote thus to Hutchinson:

"Je déclare ici, au nom de l'honneur, Monsieur le Général, qu'en fait de collections, aucune de celles qui existent ici en petit nombre, n'appartient à la République française; toutes ont été faites aux frais et dépens des particuliers. Je ne connais d'autres objets qu'on puisse regarder comme propriété de la République que deux sarcophages, l'un pris à Alexandrie, l'autre venu du Caire."

Our officials, however, soon discovered that there was a good deal besides, and that Menou was trying to carry off the famous Rosetta Stone as his own property. When this was claimed as part of the public

[1] Sir Robert Wilson, "History of the British Expedition to Egypt" (Lond., 1803), pp. 346-353.

collections he wrote to Hutchinson the following curious epistle:

"J'ai en ma possession une pierre, que j'ai fait déterrer à Rosette et qui porte trois inscriptions différentes. Elle était ma propriété, mais je vous déclare que je comptais véritablement l'offrir à la République, en arrivant en France. Vous la voulez, Monsieur le Général? Vous l'aurez, parce que vous êtes le plus fort, et je ne serai pas fâché de publier en Europe que ma propriété m'a été enlevée par les ordres de M. le Général anglais. . . ."

A week later Hamilton found out that Menou (Abdallah Menou as he signed himself in Egyptian proclamations) had a number of Arab manuscripts. But on the request being made for them to be handed over, the commander took up an impregnable position. He had embraced the Moslem faith. Would the English take away even his prayer-books?—

"Quant aux manuscrits coptes, je n'en ai pas un seul; quant aux manuscrits arabes, j'ai, comme cela est nécessaire à un vrai sectateur de l'Islamisme, deux Corans et trois ou quatre petits livres de prières. J'imagine, Monsieur le Général, que vous avez quelques bibles du rite anglais; ainsi nous possédons chacun des livres de nos religions. J'ai parlé ce matin à M. Hamilton de mes Corans; il m'a répondu avec beaucoup d'obligeance qu'on n'enlevait à personne les livres dans lesquels on pouvait prier, selon le rite de sa croyance religieuse." [1]

[1] "Kléber et Menou en Egypte": documents publiés par M. Rousseau (Paris: Picard 1900), pp. 423-426. The editor adds to this last letter a footnote respecting Hamilton: "Erudit anglais qui désirait s'approprier les travaux des Français."!

After helping to secure for the British Museum nearly all the antiquities in question (except Menou's "prayer-books") Hamilton stayed on in Egypt; and on the 23rd of October, as his journal shows, he set out from Cairo, with Captain Leake of the Artillery, Lieutenant Hayes of the Engineers, and an escort of nine British soldiers and two "seapoys" (*sic*) for an official tour of inspection of Egypt. The sepoys were doubtless selected because of their acquaintance with the desert between Suez and Cairo, which their contingent had traversed in the preceding campaign. Sir Robert Wilson in the Introduction to his "History of the British Expedition to Egypt" says that Hamilton penetrated further into Egypt than any of the French had done. This is incorrect: Desaix had advanced as far as, and even slightly beyond, Assouân, as Denon has described; but Hamilton was the first to describe the country in its normal aspect. I now give in extracts the most interesting portions of Hamilton's Report to Lord Elgin.

"... We continued our voyage up the Nile as far as the latitude of Abu Girgeh, near to which, the Nile being now at its greatest height and the country on each side of the river being almost one uninterrupted sea from the main channel of the stream to the mountains of the desert, we quitted the Nile, and entering a large canal to the right hand, we crossed over that wide tract of country to which the ancient Greeks gave the name of Heptanomis, which is now called Houartani (the Central Part), crossing what on the chart of d'Anville is erroneously laid down as a very wide canal under the name of the Bathen, and entering the canal which flows at the foot of the western hills and is called the Bahr Yussuf. This entrance is nearly

opposite to Beknese, the ancient Oxyrynchus.[1] From thence we followed the windings of Bahr Yussuf till we reached the ancient ruins of Ashmounain, and near them the modern town of Melavin. Here we again reached the Nile by one of the several mouths of Bahr Yussuf, on which were situated the two guard-houses mentioned by Strabo under the names of Hermopolitana, Phylace, and the Thebaica Phylace: this being the real southern[2] boundary of the Thebaid.

"We then continued our route up the Nile as far as Assouan, only stopping whenever the wind failed us; and leaving for our return the examination of the objects of antiquity and other interesting points. While at Assouan, we made several excursions farther to the southward, but in consequence of the independent state of the inhabitants in this part of Nubia, which is called Berbery, we were unable to prosecute our journey as far as Ibrim, the nominal limit of the Dominions of the Grand Signor, though, in fact, his authority even in the best times is acknowledged no higher than the town and Castle of Assouan. Our return to Cairo was much slower than our journey upwards; and we arrived at Ghizeh the 12th of February."

He then describes his journeys in Lower Egypt, and, after describing the general geography of the country, he refers to the desirability of conciliating the wandering tribes of Arabs as far as possible.

"The shortsighted policy of the late Government in Egypt[3] has prompted them to wage a continual war

[1] The ancient name means sturgeon (the *sharp-snouted* fish) which was worshipped there. See Strabo, Bk. xvii., ch. 1, § 40.—J. H. R.

[2] This is a slip for "northern." The Thebaid stretched from Syene (Assouan) to Phylace Thebaica.

[3] That of the Mamelukes.

against these wandering Arabs, and thus to make active enemies of those who might be converted into the best friends. Hands alone and protection of property lawfully acquired are wanted to make Egypt resume some appearance of its ancient splendour. Both these would be gained by an unrestrained admission of these Arabs into the cultivated country and to the privileges and rights of citizens. A large armed force would thus be turned against the enemies of the country, instead of acting against herself [*sic*], and at least an hundred thousand families would be added to the active and labouring part of the community.

"The best-cultivated part of Upper Egypt is what was inhabited for two hundred years by the tribe of Aouârâh. This land extends from How to Girgeh, and thus comprehends almost all those districts where the sugar-cane (the most valuable produce of husbandry) is cultivated with any success and to a great extent. The feudal sovereignty, which the chiefs of this tribe had long enjoyed under the government of the Turks, was destroyed thirty years ago by Mahomed Bey, and that country is now sinking to a level with the rest.

"The chief sustenance of the common people of Egypt and consequently the principal produce of the country is the *doura* or Guinea corn; this grows equally well in the highest and lowest parts of Egypt, though it sometimes suffers in the Delta for want of proper precautions being taken for the admission of water into the fields.

"The other most general productions of Egypt are wheat, barley, Indian corn, sugar-cane, saffranon [*sic*] and lentils. In lower Egypt a great quantity of rice is grown, and it is only for this grain that great attention is required for the proper distribution of the water and the tillage of the ground. For all the rest Nature has done so much in covering the whole land with the rich soil of the Nile that scarcely anything has been left for

man but to throw the seed into the ground and to take up its produce.

"The French in the Egyptian publications have entered into all the details of their economy: the expenses incident to the different kinds of cultivation, the price of land, the wages of labour, and the usual profits of stock applied to the principal articles of growth and consumption. There are inaccuracies in some of their calculations, but in general their statements are drawn from the reports of persons well acquainted with the process, and who found it their interest to give all the information they were in possession of to those who could command it of them.

"Such is the simplicity and ease in every process of Egyptian agriculture that perhaps little or no improvement need be made in those pursuits which already engage and occupy a large portion of the inhabitants. But there is great room for improvement in the making the dykes and bridges by which alone the country may be made practicable during the summer. I cannot but think, too, that there is little more than one-tenth of the cultivable land, *i.e.*, of the land over which the water can be conducted, in a state of actual cultivation. Very little expense would be required for this amendment and there could be no risk whatever in the trial. A proper management of the water is the first, the last, and the only object to be attended to. Another source of amendment which would offer to the speculator immense advantages, is changing the kind of productions; for as all the soil of the country is equally rich, and as some parts that belong to rich proprietors are already in a state of producing sugar and indigo, a much larger proportion of it might be converted to the same object, without deducting from the total produce of corn, *doura*, and rice, the staple objects of consumption, and could give employment to much larger capitals, and ensure to the undertaker a far greater proportional profit.

"Arts and manufactures are in the lowest state of decline throughout Egypt. A little of its own cotton is wrought into coarse cloths in the neighbourhood of Esnèh only. The cotton of Syria is used in all other places where there are any manufactures of this kind, and this is only for household use. In many villages of Upper Egypt coarse linen shawls, blue-and-white striped and checked [*sic*], are manufactured and sold at Cairo, Damietta and Rosetta. At Damietta there are some manufactures of coarse linen, with silk borders, and some others of silk-and-cotton shawls, which are worn by the Greeks. A considerable quantity of indigo is grown for home consumption, all the women's dresses being dyed a dark blue; and a great deal of carthamus, or saffron dye, is exported. The crop of sugar is very uncertain; sometimes Egypt furnishes large quantities of it to Syria: in other years Egypt purchases sugars from Europe for its own consumption. The sugar plantations are in general very profitable. The molasses are consumed in the country, not in the form of rum, but in their pure state they are a very common article of food. In Lower Egypt the sugar-canes do not yield sugar enough to support a manufacture, and are therefore brought green to market and are eaten by the peasants and children. Oils are extracted from the carthamus, lint, lettuce, and sesame seeds."

Mr. Hamilton then describes at length the commerce of Egypt. Most of the imports were from France; but from England she obtained:

"About 1,000 muskets and pistols: the muskets about 30 shillings each, the pistols 125 to 200 piastres per pair; from 300 to 500 watches, 50 to 140 piastres each; 70 bales of cloth, 63 feet in each piece at 8 to 15 shillings the piece; 60 to 70 butts of tin of $4\frac{1}{2}$ cantars each, at 100 piastres the cantar, from England direct, and about as much from Leghorn, Venice, and Smyrna:

and a great part of it is sent forward to the port of Jedda. Small quantities of India muslins are brought from England when delays or accidents to the caravans have made the demand at Cairo exceed the supply. They are then sold privately, as the Turkish Government were exceedingly strict about the importation of India goods by sea: but the Beys in their liberal encouragement of European commerce abolished these restrictions."

He then states that the chief exports of rice and wheat were to the Syrian ports—especially Jaffa, Acre, and "Latikea." Damietta also traded with Cyprus.

"The French did not alter the Custom House regulations for the first eighteen months. After which they laid an impost of 8 per cent. on all entries from whatever port into Damietta, and sold the monopoly of this duty to a company of fifteen persons, Christians and Turks, for 125,000 piastres. They did the same for Semenoud, Mansourah, and Cairo. For the exports they levied a duty of 2 per cent. from the merchants of the place and 4 per cent. from foreigners. The only exports they made were by land to Syria. . . .

"Oriental nations in general are so adverse to the adoption of any change in their local customs that it would require a much longer and better established revolution than the residence of the French in Egypt to have produced any material change in the manners or pursuits of its inhabitants. The natives of Egypt, moreover, have been long accustomed to look with indifference on a change of masters; and as their miserable state authorizes them to be confident that they cannot change for the worse, there is no country where a revolution is so easy or of so little immediate consequence to its inhabitants.

"But the French have here, as in the rest of their

conquests, fully succeeded in leaving behind them a universal detestation of their name. . . .

"No restraint was imposed on the extortions practised by those in power, who only showed more art and avidity in following the footsteps of the Beys, and of their deputies, the Cashefs, who were placed as governors of districts and provinces. Their imprudent policy led them to attempt the destruction of the wandering Arabs, but they only succeeded in making them more inveterate and dangerous enemies of the peaceful inhabitants.

"At Cairo and Damietta, the only places where they thought it worth while to erect any public buildings, they had only gone so far in their plans as to pull down a very great number of houses and leave a large portion of the inhabitants without a lodging. At the siege of Cairo, the large suburb of Boulac was entirely destroyed as well as some part of the city; no attempt whatever was made to repair either one or the other, but, on the contrary, the contributions were more than doubled on the surrender.

"The causeways, roads, and bridges have in no instance been restored or repaired. No canals have been opened to facilitate communication or to extend fertility, no European manufactures have been introduced, nor any improvements encouraged in those already established; the peasants continually vexed by new inventive modes of paying the taxes; the religious prejudices of the people insulted in the highest degree; women of the first families seduced from their parents and husbands; interior commerce clogged by a thousand new regulations and useless offices; that carried on with foreign nations entirely put a stop to; a great deficiency in the quantity of goods sent from Jedda to Aceir or to Suez; no arrival of caravans from the interior of Africa with guns, slaves, or gold powder; and no escort furnished for the protection of the pilgrimage to Mecca, by which the interests of the

merchants and the religious feelings of the devout were equally hurt and insulted; an administration of justice in the highest degree partial and corrupt. These, my Lord, are the principal features of the French establishment in Egypt. Some, I believe, wished them to continue in the country, but they were those only who could come in for a share of the plunder."[1]

After referring to the desultory warfare still going on between the Turks and Mamelukes, and giving his reasons for believing that the latter must succumb, he proceeds as follows:

"With regard to the probable issue of the present combat between the Turks and the Mamelukes, it is fairly to be presumed that by persisting in this line of conduct, the former might in the end extirpate their enemies; they have greatly the advantage in numbers, they have a numerous and well-appointed artillery, of which their enemies have none, and their gun-boats give them the command of the towns on its banks. The courage and ability of Tahir Pasha have been tried and are known; and they have at their command almost all the resources of the country, and they will naturally receive supplies and recruits from Constantinople.

"But so little confidence is to be placed in the known fickleness and weakness of the Turkish Government, that we can hardly expect the bow will be long bent. Their soldiers are chiefly strangers to the country. The Mamelukes look upon it as their native soil; they

[1] This description is perhaps overdrawn. Nevertheless, Kléber's letters in the work referred to above (especially those of Sept. 16th, 18th, and Oct. 8th, 1799), show that the French finances were hopelessly in arrear when Bonaparte left Egypt, and that the public works had almost entirely to be given up.—J. H. R.

besides are better mounted and more practised in the art of Egyptian warfare. The inhabitants of the deserts, and the deserts themselves are their best friends, and if they ever chuse to venture a general engagement they can easily draw on their side several thousands of Arabs, well armed and mounted. Besides the Mamelukes are fighting for the recovery of what they long thought their own property, and have no retreat. But the Turkish troops, as soon as their plunder is finished, must wish to return home. The Mameluke force, if united, is certainly not above 4,000 men.

"Whether in the event of the Turks being victorious they could keep the country in future is uncertain. But against a European army they certainly could not, any more than any other part of their Empire, which must yield as soon as it is attacked. But in Egypt, even in time of peace, they must keep up a large body of cavalry equal to that of the Mamelukes, for the very same purpose to which they were destined, viz., the collecting of taxes: without such assistance it must ever be impossible for a despotic power to raise its revenue from among the people, until a European civilization is introduced throughout the Empire, regular civil establishments are settled in the large towns, public roads are maintained to secure at all times the public tranquillity, and until a mild and honest Government can teach its subjects that they give a small part of their property to preserve the remainder, that even the small part will be returned to them, in a different shape indeed, but with interest.

"It has long been a consideration in England to have a complete collection of the Holy Scriptures in Ancient Coptic. Such a collection in its full extent does not, I believe, exist; and the French have carried away from Egypt all the MSS. they thought valuable in this language as well as in the Arabic.

"All the Coptic books that remain are in the hands of the Priests, and these are reduced to a few used in

the divine Service. These Priests are as ignorant of the Language they read, as are those that hear. They cannot even point out what words are of the old Egyptian stock, and what are Greek. Nor do they know the date of their MSS. Besides, many use copies printed in Rome, with an Arabic Interpretation. The Priests and Bishops would take no interest whatever in making such a collection themselves, and being unacquainted with the general principles of the language, they of course know nothing of the different idioms of Memphis, Thebes and the oasis of Ammon.

"An Englishman sent on purpose into the country for this object might perhaps be successful, but he must understand at least the Arabic Language, he must have the countenance of the Government in his pursuits, and the Patriarch and the Church in general must be gained over to our cause by some privileges obtained for them by our influence with the Turks. The inferior Priests would then be ordered to give up what was not absolutely necessary for the service of the Church; and all must be taken without choice, except what are said to be Missals and Liturgies. A certain sum of money must be distributed to those who are willing to give up what is in their possession.

"The Copts are at present very well inclined to the English, as are also the Christians of Egypt of all denominations, and will therefore be well disposed to meet the wishes of the English Government. There are no Copts higher up than Esnèh: but between this Town and Cairo they have Chapels or Convents in all the principal places. The Society *de propagandâ Fide* at Rome have five religious establishments above Cairo: Siout, Tantah, Aknuin, Niguate, Farshiout.

"It can hardly be expected that in a letter dated from Athens, I should either be inclined or sufficiently bold to delay long on the ancient monuments of Egypt, and it may be still more unpardonable in me to address Your Lordship on this subject the moment you have

quitted those models of taste and magnificence which are so deservedly esteemed by the lovers of the beautiful, and y^e^ sublime: but I may be allowed to say a few words on the recollection of those objects, which when present afforded me the highest satisfaction and pleasure.

"If the Temples of ancient Egypt are not to be compared with those of Greece for elegance and beauty, there are however many other points in which they are superior to them. The prodigious size of their columns to which the whole temples are proportioned,—the height and thickness of their walls—the obelisks placed in them in the most advantageous situations—the colossal statues that seem to guard the sacred entrances (particularly in those at Thebes),—the rows of colossal sphinxes which introduced the worshipper to the mysteries of his religion—the enormous blocks of stone and granite used in the construction of these buildings —the very great age of the greater part of them, which seem to baffle the efforts of Man who cannot fathom it without the assistance of the Stars—but above all the wonderful variety of the paintings and sculptures, which cover the walls, columns and gateways are sufficient objects of interest, and invite the curiosity of the traveller, and will not fail to reward his pains.

"These paintings and sculptures in particular, tho' they appear to have been long the object of the devout jealousy of the Christian Iconoclasts, and after them, of the furious animosity of the Mahomedan conquerors, are still for the most part in a high state of preservation; and offer to future travellers the key to all the mysteries of Egyptian Mythology, which is said to be the mother of the Greek, and was certainly founded on physical properties and phenomena, of which we are perhaps now ignorant.

"The extent of the conquests of their early monarchs may be discovered by an attentive examination of the pictures of their battles, in which the arms, dress, mode

of fighting and other customs of their enemies appear to be faithfully represented; and thus shall we be able to clear up many intricate points in Ancient History.

"The Greeks certainly derived all their astronomical knowledge from the Egyptians—and what they did learn, they acquired by stealth or by intreaty from a people extremely unwilling to communicate their discoveries. Science thus acquired must have been very imperfect; and accordingly, such was the state in which we received it from them. But till these last two centuries, Astronomy had made few or no advances in Western Europe. It is therefore very probable that in some respects we are still behind the original masters: and this is still more likely to be the case, as we find them in possession of some late discoveries.

"In the interior of some of the private sepulchres of the Ancient Egyptians, we have observed (a discovery first made by the French) a variety of paintings and sculptures representing all the economical pursuits, with the whole details of the different modes of Agriculture then in use, even at a period so remote as when they harnessed their fellow creatures to the plough. Here you see the ground prepared for wheat, barley or flax—the reaping—the harvest home—the exportation of their produce—the farmyard of the great landed proprietor—his vineyard—the progress [*sic*] of making wine—a magnificent feast given to his relations and friends—and, finally all the pompous ceremonials of his funeral. In others are represented all kinds of household employments—a great variety of arts and manufactures—some resembling what is still practised; others shewing an ingenuity now forgotten.

"Fishes and birds are seen caught in great profusion by the day labourers in parts of Egypt where now the neglect of culture and the destruction of the canals have long chased far off both the one and the other. Every kind of amusement, as dancing, wrestling, hunting, fishing, etc., is represented in the brightest

colours and which still preserve their freshness. These figures are, of course, executed by different hands, and are, therefore, of different degrees of merit. Their style is in general that of those on the Etruscan vases, and their excellence always equal to them, and often superior. Our modern painters might like to study colours that last for 3,000 years.

"In the Royal Sepulchres you may distinguish the tyrant from the father of his people. In the portraits of the latter the monarch is represented receiving grateful offerings from his people, and admitted to offer others himself to the gods. In those of the tyrant, you see him brought before the Tribunal of Jurors, who hear the imputations made against him by subjects whom he has oppressed, and by captives whom he has maimed: and even the headless silently plead their cause with their bleeding necks before the last Arbiter of happiness and misery."

This description of the ancient shrines, which seeks to hide the almost complete ignorance of the writer under the cloak of sonorous expressions, is typical of the whole state of human knowledge respecting Egypt a century ago. The secrets of that vanished civilization seemed to be lost for ever, and the traveller could judge only by sensuous impressions of the beliefs, customs, and arts of that elusive race. Even so, however, the contrast between the power, splendour, and complexity of the Egypt of the Pharaohs and the meanness and misery of its life in 1802 was only too apparent. It is clear from Hamilton's account that the French occupation had imparted only the slightest and most artificial stimulus to the degraded Copts and to their unteachable rulers; and his account is now seen to be confirmed by the official despatches of

Kléber and Menou, which show that the French Government there was fast verging towards bankruptcy at the time when it succumbed to the British expedition.

Finally, it is of interest to reflect that Hamilton reckoned the amount of land actually tilled in 1802 to be only about one-tenth of what could be cultivated under a good system of irrigation. Apparently his report as to the potential wealth of Egypt had no direct influence on British policy, for in my search of the British archives I have found no sign that we then aimed at anything more than the restoration of Turkish rule, as long as Turkey was friendly to us. But this document remains as an interesting proof of the immense progress that has been achieved both in our knowledge of Egypt and in Egypt itself during the past hundred years. The key to the mysteries of Egyptology lay hidden in that Rosetta Stone about which Menou and Hamilton wrangled; and similarly, the key that was to unlock the sluice-gates of prosperity for Egypt lay in the perception (now at last realized in the Assouan dam) that an effective system of irrigation would multiply tenfold the area of cultivable land.

V

CANNING AND DENMARK IN 1807[1]

SOME of the questions connected with the bombardment of Copenhagen and the capture of the Danish fleet in September-October, 1807, have never yet been explained, and probably never will be completely cleared up; but new light is, I think, thrown on them from some of the records, which, by the kind permission of the Foreign Office and of the Admiralty authorities, I have been able to examine at the Record Office.[2] The recent publication *in extenso* of the secret articles of the treaties of Tilsit, July 7th, 1807, revealed the text of the agreement whereby the Czar Alexander consented to make common cause with Napoleon against Great Britain, if the latter did not, before November 1st, 1807, mitigate the severity of her first orders in council and agree to restore to France her

[1] Reprinted from "The English Historical Review" for January, 1896.

[2] The chief account of the Copenhagen affair is that given in the "Annual Register" for 1807, which publishes the proclamations, terms of the capitulation, and some few interesting documents besides. The "Annual Register" for 1808 also contains a full digest of the debates on the king's speech of January, 1808. They turned mainly on the Copenhagen affair, but revealed nothing not known before.

maritime conquests effected since the year 1805. In case of England's non-acceptance of these terms by December 1st, 1807, the two emperors agreed to

"summon the three courts of Copenhagen, Stockholm, and Lisbon to close their ports to the English, and declare war against England. That one of the three courts which refuses shall be treated as an enemy; and in the case of Sweden refusing Denmark shall be compelled to declare war against her."

How the news of this important proposal reached the English Government the despatches of our Foreign Office, very naturally, do not say; but they contain the following significant statement of our ambassador to Russia, Lord Leveson Gower, dated Memel, July 15th, 1807:

"It was strongly reported at Königsberg among the French that Bernadotte had received orders to march against Holstein, with the view of forcing the court of Copenhagen to shut the passage of the Sound against the English."

Our envoy further reports Napoleon's determination to expel the Swedes from their Pomeranian possessions, and to have all Russian and Prussian ports closed against English ships. But, as information reached Canning on July 21st, it may be presumed to have been anterior to this. The French, following a hint in Fouché's "Memoirs," have suspected Talleyrand of having played the informer; and the disgust which Talleyrand felt for Napoleon at Tilsit[1] lends some

[1] "Les engagements qu'il avait fait rompre et ceux qu'il avait fait prendre l'avaient enivré." On the other hand Mr. Fyffe's

colour to the supposition that there, as at Vienna in 1805, he had secretly done his best to prevent the ruin of the old monarchies.

Whatever may have been the channel, or channels, of communication for the important news sent to Canning, there can be no doubt of its correctness. Napoleon's correspondence yields ample proof of his determination to compel Denmark to take sides against England and Sweden. Thus on August 2nd, 1807, he wrote to Bernadotte, "If England refuses to accept the Russian mediation, Denmark must declare war against her, or I must declare war against Denmark. In the latter case your duty will be to seize the whole of the mainland of Denmark." In naval operations England acted with none of the supineness which in her military affairs had recently aroused the wrath of the Czar. Admiral Gambier, with twenty-four British ships of war, appeared in the Sound on August 3rd; and subsequent additions from England and from the force which was already doing duty at Stralsund and Rügen brought up the total strength of his fleet to eighty-eight ships (September 3rd) besides twenty others which were cruising off Rügen or in the Cattegat.[1] The power of this fleet serves to show the importance attached by our government to an immediate and peaceful attainment of the aims proposed.

suggestion ("History of Modern Europe," vol. i., p. 350, note) that the information came from one of the Anglophil Russian diplomatists has much to recommend it.

[1] Captain Mahan (ii., 276), in his brief but very temperate treatment of this subject, somewhat underrates the numbers of the fleet. It was perhaps the most powerful fleet which had ever left our shores

These aims are set forth in the following instructions, dated Foreign Office, July 28th, 1807, given to Mr. Jackson, who was accredited as special envoy to the Danish prince royal:

"In consequence of intelligence which has been received here, through various channels,[1] of the designs of Bonaparte to occupy the territory and ports of Holstein, for the purpose of shutting out Great Britain from all communication with the continent, and ultimately to avail himself of the Danish marine as an instrument of active hostility against this country, it has become necessary that the most prompt and decisive explanation should immediately be entered into with the court of Denmark."

The envoy is then charged to express

"His Majesty's just determination to obtain for himself that satisfaction and security which the designs of the enemy and the situation of Denmark impose on His Majesty the necessity of requiring. The forward state of equipment of the Danish fleet would alone have entitled His Majesty to require such satisfaction. That equipment could be made in no other contemplation than that of eventual hostility against Great Britain. The tone which Denmark has assumed in the discussions with this country relating to that mitigated measure of reprisal which His Majesty had been driven to the necessity of adopting in consequence of the French decree of blockade, compared with the forbearance which she appears to have shown in respect to any remonstrance on the subject of the French decree itself, must naturally have excited a suspicion in His

[1] The plural would seem to imply that there was not, as has been generally assumed, any one authoritative channel of communication.

Majesty's mind . . . of the ill disposition of the court of Denmark towards the country. . . . It is only by receiving an adequate pledge and security for the adherence of Denmark to whatever engagements she may enter into that His Majesty can consider himself as having obtained such satisfaction as it is his duty to demand."

From this despatch it is obvious that the irritation between England and Denmark on the subject of neutral commerce must be considered as indirectly contributing towards the unhappy events of September, 1807. When it became a question for Denmark to decide at eight days' notice for or against an alliance with the power which had crippled her navy in 1801, and was now cramping her commerce, she naturally decided against it. She had almost openly expressed her sympathy with France at the commencement of the war of 1805; and there was every ground for believing that, unless strong pressure was used, she would now side with the power which could wrest from her her German lands.

As to the statement made in the instructions to Mr. Jackson that the Danish navy was in a forward state of equipment for sea, it can be shown from our own archives that our government was completely misinformed. In the Admiralty records of Admiral Gambier's expedition there is a report drawn up, at the instance of the British ambassador, by Captain Francis Beauman. This officer reported that he visited the dockyard, ships, etc., at Copenhagen on July 25th, 1807, and found "in a state of ordinary 18 sail of the line, 11 frigates, 10 sloops, 4 floating batteries, and several small gunboats." All were in excellent repair and "compleatest order."

"I am of opinion [he continues] the whole of the Danish fleet might with the greatest ease, provided it had seamen, be at sea in six weeks from the commencement of their equipment. . . . I may venture to assert there is not at present the shadow of appearance for the equipment of a fleet, as it is impossible it could be hid from the eye of any naval officer."

That Admiral Gambier completely credited his officer's report is proved by the insertion of a clause in the terms of the capitulation of Copenhagen to the effect that the British forces were to evacuate Zealand within six weeks, or earlier if possible. That space of time was fixed, in all probability, on the ground of Captain Beauman's report; and the issue of events proved the correctness of the captain's judgement.

As Captain Beauman's examination was made on July 25th, it was impossible for the erroneous impressions of the British Government to be removed until it was too late to recede, even if it had been desirous of so doing. Furthermore, the knowledge that the English Government had been misled as to the condition of the Danish fleet must have prejudiced the court of Copenhagen against any offers of alliance in which the surrender of the fleet was urged as an indispensable preliminary. It is quite possible also that Admiral Gambier and Lord Cathcart, after becoming convinced that the Danish fleet was only in its normal condition, must have felt additional repugnance at its seizure; and their desire to be quit of an inglorious and painful duty may partly account for their proposal of terms of capitulation, which contravened the larger and more statesmanlike views that Canning undoubtedly cherished.

Mr. Jackson was distinctly informed in his original instructions of July 28th that the British Government, being "not unaware of the apparent harshness of the demand" (for the surrender of the fleet in pledge), was ready to enter into any reasonable stipulations which the court of Denmark might suggest. These might be (1) a treaty of alliance and mutual defence, or (2) the fleet was to be received as a "sacred deposit and with a solemn convention as to its restoration at the conclusion of the war." In the first case it was proposed that the British Government should subsidize Denmark at the rate of 100,000 Dutch florins for 1,000 foot soldiers, and 120,000 Dutch florins for 1,000 horse-soldiers, which she should keep on active service; and a British fleet of 15 ships of the line and 6 frigates was to be offered for her defence.

As an alternative plan a project of a secret treaty was to be offered for—(*a*) the handing over of the Danish fleet as a "sacred pledge" till the peace; (*b*) a subsidy of £100,000 for the service of the Danish fleet; (*c*) relaxation of the blockade then imposed on Danish ports and rivers; (*d*) assistance to Denmark in case she should be attacked; (*e*) a defensive alliance was to be formed; (*f*) this treaty was to be secret. In these original instructions it is evident that Denmark was to be offered fair and honourable terms, and that her alliance was strongly desired as a means of staying the course of French conquest, and of protecting our ally, Sweden, from pressure on the west. Obviously this was the only hope of keeping Sweden from the grasp of the two mighty potentates who now disposed of the fortunes of Europe. Enough was known of their policy at Tilsit to show that Sweden was in great danger on

the side of Russia. The British Government, therefore, was morally justified in bringing considerable pressure to bear upon Denmark, so as to prevent her falling into the power of the two emperors and thus assuring the ruin of Sweden by an invasion from Norway.

The pressure which Canning proposed to exert on Denmark was painful and onerous; but he expressly asserted in the instructions that a demonstration of overwhelming force should be made, with a view to saving the honour of the Danish Government. It is clear, then, that the British Government never contemplated the seizure of the Danish fleet, or even its temporary appropriation in deposit, as the beginning and end of their policy. Our ministers were desirous of saving from the wreck of the European system the maritime peoples of the north by adding Denmark as an important connecting link to the already existing alliance between England and Sweden. Only thus could Napoleon's continental system be rendered inoperative. Only by an Anglo-Scandinavian alliance could the north of Europe be kept free from the oppressive yoke which lay upon its central and southern states.

Canning, however, in his second memorandum to Jackson neutralized the effect of his first instructions. This document, dated Foreign Office, July 29th, and marked "Separate and most secret," contains the following statement:

"You will carefully bear in mind that the possession of the Danish fleet is the one main and indispensable object to which the whole of your negotiations is [*sic*] to be directed, and without which no other stipulation or concession can be considered as of any value or

importance. In the event, therefore, of the Danish Government even consenting to enter into the treaty of alliance as proposed in the project with which you are furnished, it will be necessary that a secret article should be added to this treaty, by which the delivery of the Danish fleet must be stipulated to take place forthwith, and without waiting for the formality of the ratification of the treaty."

(Signed) "G. CANNING."

The space of eight days was to be granted to the Danish Government for consideration; and after that time had elapsed the British fleet and forces were to consider the want of any result as proof of a refusal to treat, and were "to proceed to act accordingly." The sequel will show that first Mr. Jackson, and subsequently Admiral Gambier and Lord Cathcart, appear to have regarded the proposals of alliance as of secondary importance, and to have acted as if the surrender of the fleet was alone essential.

Proceeding to Denmark, Jackson had an interview first with the Danish minister, Bernstorff, who, on Jackson's assertion that Bonaparte was planning the seizure of the Danish fleet,

"asserted with the most violent expressions and gestures that His Majesty's Government was in possession of no such information, that it was mere conjecture, that we were lightly and hastily misled by false reports and surmises, which I myself did not believe . . . that I was forcing Denmark into a war."

In reply Jackson stated that he (Bernstorff) might be well assured of the "authenticity of the advices (*sic*) on which the present proceeding was grounded." It seems, then, that the English envoy, at the outset of

his difficult negotiations, committed the tactical error of placing the question of the fleet in the very forefront of all his communications, instead of naming it as an indispensable condition of an Anglo-Danish alliance. Canning regarded the delivery of the Danish fleet "in deposit" as a necessary guarantee for such an alliance, as well as for the purpose of removing any motive for a French occupation of Denmark; but his instructions were for an alliance in which the delivery of the fleet occurred as a second though all-important condition.

In reporting the interview which he had on August 9th with the Danish Prince Royal at Kiel, Jackson seems to admit that he did not begin by inviting the Prince to consider the alternative treaties of alliance, projects of which had been drawn up by Canning. He appears to have gone straight to the most difficult and delicate part of all his negotiations. "I declared to him that in the present state of the north of Europe the delivery of the Danish fleet into His Majesty's hands had become a matter of indispensable necessity." Jackson then stated the alternative lines of policy which were open to Denmark—either (1) alliance with England, the co-operation of naval and military proceedings, the guarantee of all the Danish possessions, and the certainty of aggrandizement to Denmark at the conclusion of a general peace; or (2) the immediate operations of a vast military and naval force upon a populous and commercial city. He stated His Majesty's heartfelt desire that the Prince should choose the former alternative.[1]

[1] Jackson does not appear to have named the terms of the second (secret) treaty of alliance, set forth in his original instructions.

The Prince replied that if Bonaparte invaded Holstein Denmark would then become the natural ally of Great Britain. He also urged very strongly the cruelty and injustice of forcing Denmark from her system of neutrality. To this Jackson replied that he was instructed only to propose an immediate alliance, not one after Bonaparte had deprived Denmark of the greatest part of her means of action. The English envoy admitted that the alternative was distressing, but that, if the Danish fleet were given up, Bonaparte would be more likely to make a general peace.

The Prince, however, was "affected by the menace accompanying the terms, which rendered them the more offensive." He returned no reply, but set off at once for Copenhagen, whither Jackson followed him; but when our envoy requested a further interview with him he was informed that the Prince had returned to Holstein and had left Bernstorff with no powers to negotiate. Justly considering this as tantamount to a refusal of his demands, Jackson retired to the fleet. The British land forces were accordingly disembarked at Wibeck, between Elsinore and Copenhagen, on August 16th; and on that same day a proclamation was issued by Admiral Gambier and Lord Cathcart, of which the most important statements are as follows:

"We ask deposit (of the Danish fleet). We have not looked to capture; so far from it, the most solemn pledge has been offered to your government, and is hereby renewed in the name and at the express command of the King, our master, that if our demand is amicably acceded to, every ship belonging to Denmark shall, at the conclusion of a general peace, be restored to her in the same condition and state of equipment as

when received under the protection of the British flag. . . . His Majesty's seamen and soldiers, when on shore, will treat Zealand, as long as your conduct to them permits it, on the footing of a province of the most friendly power in alliance with Great Britain, whose territory has the misfortune to be the theatre of war. . . . (Articles of food, fuel, etc., will be paid for, though requisitions must unavoidably be made.) . . . The government of His Danish Majesty having hitherto refused to treat this matter in an amicable way, part of the army has been disembarked, and the whole force has assumed a warlike attitude; but it is, as yet, not too late for the voice of reason and moderation to be heard."

The Danish government, however, regarded the disembarkation as the commencement of hostilities, and issued a proclamation on August 16th. "Hostilities having commenced on the part of the English . . . all English property is sequestrated." Nevertheless on September 1st, 1807, Gambier and Cathcart renewed their offer of an amicable settlement in a despatch sent to General Peiman, the Governor of Copenhagen, asserting that the Danish fleet should be restored at the general peace in as good condition as it was when received in deposit. "But," continues the despatch, "if this offer is rejected now it cannot be repeated. The captured property, public and private, must then belong to the captors; and the city, when taken, must share the fate of conquered places." A temporising reply having been received, the bombardment commenced on September 2nd; and on September 5th Gambier reports, "For the last two days the conflagration has been very considerable, and at this moment rages with great violence." On the evening of that day a Danish

officer came with a flag of truce; and negotiations began, which ended in the articles of capitulation being signed on September 7th.[1] The English forces were to occupy the citadel and dockyard; the ships and stores were to be delivered up;[2] and (article v.) within six weeks, or earlier if possible, the forces were to evacuate Zealand.

Admiral Gambier in a despatch of October 15th reports "the scrupulous exactness that the Danes have observed in adhering to the terms of the capitulation." He also reports, after an examination of the coast of Zealand, that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to hold Zealand against the hostility of France, unless with a larger force than was then at his and Lord Cathcart's disposal. This opinion, coinciding with the commanders' views as to the chief aim of the expedition, led them to press on the equipment of the Danish fleet, so as to take it away at the earliest time possible.[3] The Danish ships were got ready for sea in the required time, and Gambier's great fleet reached Yarmouth Roads

[1] The articles having been published (see "Ann. Reg.," 1807, p. 695), it is unnecessary to give them in full here. At the head of the English signatories comes the name of Sir Arthur Wellesley.

[2] There was no mention made of restitution. The ships given up comprised one of 96 guns, two 84's, twelve 74's, fifteen frigates, six brigs, twenty-five gunboats. Most of them were sold in or after 1814.

[3] In the heated debates on the King's speech in January-February, 1808, the difficulty or impossibility of holding Zealand was urged by ministers as the chief excuse for the speedy evacuation, Lord Castlereagh stating that had our war-ships been distributed so as to guard the coast they would have been five miles apart. Canning's despatches, however, prove his extreme annoyance at article v., and his desire to evade it if possible.

on October 29th. In one of his last despatches (October 20th) he adverts to the offer, made by Mr. Pierrepoint to the Swedish King, that the British land forces should assist in the defence of Sweden. The offer was refused by that monarch. On the surrender of Copenhagen Mr. Jackson immediately applied to General Peiman for a passport to return to England through Holstein, for the purpose of having an interview with the Prince Royal, and thus bringing about the "re-establishment of perfect harmony and good understanding between our two countries. This was the original object of my mission; nobody regrets more than I do that it did not succeed in the first instance." Mr. Jackson's effort was as unavailing as the previous one.

That Canning regarded this abrupt issue of his policy as unsatisfactory and unfortunate is proved by two documents in "Foreign Correspondence," Denmark, vol. 197. The first is undated, but is pencilled on the back, "For Mr. Pierrepoint, about October, 1807." The preliminary article is as follows:

"The capitulation to be executed according to its true sense and meaning, as understood by the officers who settled it. But in the event of a refusal on the part of the court of Denmark to execute any article according to what is conceived to be its true sense, the military possession of Zealand to be continued until such sense shall have been clearly ascertained and acted upon. And, at all events, it is understood that this military possession is to be continued by mutual consent until the conclusion of the negotiations for peace between the two powers."

There follows a draft of a "Proposed Basis of Negotiation," in which the alternative of neutrality or

alliance with England is to be offered to Denmark; and the offer of the restitution of the Danish fleet within three years of a general peace is again made. Canning's disappointment and chagrin at the terms of capitulation of September 7th, especially at the fixing of so short a term as six weeks for the evacuation of Zealand, are even more decisively asserted in a further memorandum, printed below. It bears no date, but there is pencilled on the back "about September, 1807." No signature is appended, but the writing is unquestionably that of Canning.

"It is evident from the tenor of Lord Cathcart's Dispatches, and from his description of the State of Copenhagen, that the insertion of the Article of the Capitulation, by which the Island of Zealand is stipulated to be evacuated in six weeks, was not at all necessary in order to accelerate or enforce the Reduction of the City. Had the surrender of the Fortress, the Navy, and the Arsenal been demanded with only the common Stipulations dictated by Humanity, and calculated as the Basis of its future Government, and unconditionally with regard to the Term of its Occupation, there cannot exist a Doubt that the Demand must have been complied with. The Proposals made to the Danish General by the Joint Commanders in Chief on September 1st, with the menace (in case of Refusal) to treat the City as other conquered Places, place this matter beyond Question. For how could the Danish Commander in Chief flatter himself with the Hope of receiving, after a successful and destructive Siege, better Terms than those which he had refused before the Bombardment? It follows, therefore, incontestably that his Lordship, in stipulating the evacuation of Zealand, pursued only the Idea imposed upon him by his original Instructions, of obtaining possession of

the Danish Fleet and Arsenals, and added voluntarily every Stipulation which could serve to tranquillize the Ferment of its Inhabitants, and console them as to their future Destiny, without adverting to the entire new Face given to the whole Question by the existing and declared War on the part of the Crown of Denmark against Great Britain.

"In this view of the subject, the correctness of which can hardly be disputed, Great Britain cannot fairly be accused in the face of Europe of having obtained Possession of Advantages by the Stipulation of Conditions which she afterwards refuses to fulfil, because the unconditional attainment of her Object was most completely in her Power. The Accusation of Breach of Faith is therefore completely done away; and the Question rests once more upon the Expediency and Utility of the continued Occupation of Zealand, with the sole views which have animated His Majesty's Government in the Equipment and in the Issue of the Expedition.

"What are these views? Not those of Hostility against Denmark, not those of violating the Integrity of the Danish Monarchy, or of dismembering his Dominions, but of raising a Barrier against the System of Subversion and Revolution which has nearly changed the Face of Europe, and of arresting its Progress there, where Great Britain can interfere with an irresistible effect. The Possession of the Danish Fleet, with or without the Consent of the Crown of Denmark, although it removes a part of the Instruments which might have been turned against the Safety of Great Britain or of the States North of the Baltic, is in itself not only not sufficient to avert the great and principal Evil, but is calculated, unless accompanied by other Measures of Occupation, to accelerate its Arrival and its complete Success. For it deprives Denmark of the power of stopping the Advance of the French, where she possessed, with her Navy, the ample Means of doing so. If she were also animated with the Inclination to

defend her Independence in the Islands against France, it is hardly too much to say that the solitary individual Act of seizing her Fleet, and thus depriving her of the Power, becomes an Act of great Injustice.

"On the evacuation of Zealand by the English Troops, it cannot be doubted that it will be occupied by the whole Danish Army, and most probably by the French Armies: that the Monarchy of Sweden, menaced by France on one side and invaded by Russia on the other, will either be subverted and compelled to join the System of Measures against England, or will be intimidated or seduced into them.

"As a Friend or as an Enemy (*sic*), the Evacuation of Zealand seems to ensure the inevitable Loss of Sweden to England; and the most probable of all Events is that, in the ensuing spring, His Majesty's Government will have to equip a new Expedition against Copenhagen and Zealand, protected by a Danish, and probably by a French Army, and covered by an united Russian and Swedish Fleet. Everything is to be hoped from the Genius of Great Britain and from the Valour of her Subjects: but it will hardly be too much, after the recent experience, to say that she will not attain her Object without prodigious Exertions, and that her Success is at the least doubtful in the Recovery of an Object which she has now in her complete Possession."

Omitting any reference to the casuistry by which Canning persuades himself that the obnoxious article of the capitulation may be set aside, it may suffice to observe the extreme importance which he attaches to a continuance of our occupation of Zealand as a means of compelling Denmark to join in the formation of an Anglo-Scandinavian alliance. It seems hardly to have occurred to him at the outset that Denmark would repel the proffered alliance when urged by a fleet more

than twice as large as that which had silenced their armed hulks six years before; still less, perhaps, did he, or the commanders of the present expedition, imagine that after the capture of her fleet Denmark would persist in hostilities. It was in vain, however, that Canning sought for an opportunity of escaping from Article V. The Danes gave no loophole of escape, and persistently refused all attempts at pacification. The English, after doing their worst, had now tied their own hands by the terms of the capitulation; and the future seemed to open to Denmark the prospect of revenge if she joined the attacks of the two emperors on Sweden. She gained her revenge, but at the cost of future disasters.

The resolve of the Danish Government shows itself in its refusal to listen to Canning's last efforts at conciliation. Instructions were drawn up on September 27th for Mr. Merry, who was to proceed at once to Copenhagen.[1] Alluding to the refusal of the Danes to allow Mr. Jackson even to land at Niehborg for the purpose of an interview, a hope is expressed that this was "due to temporary irritation," and was not "a determined purpose to remain at war with His Majesty." Mr. Merry is informed that the capitulation had been signed with the belief that the cessation of hostilities at Copenhagen was equivalent to "a termination of the war." He was to point out that unless the Danish declaration of war was withdrawn the British forces would not be removed far from Zealand, lest Sweden should be left open to attack; and the reoccupation of Zealand was to be hinted at as a last though most

[1] For an account of Mr. Merry's mission see Mr. S. Lane-Poole's "Life of Stratford Canning," i., 30-36 (1888).

painful alternative. These overtures could never even be proposed. The Danish authorities and the Russian ambassador at Copenhagen threw difficulties in Merry's way. Hostilities were resumed by the Danes at the expiration of the armistice (October 23rd), and did not cease until the treaty of Kiel (January, 1814).

A review of the evidence afforded by the documents of our Foreign Office seems to warrant the following conclusions:

1. There is no documentary proof that Canning's information as to Napoleon's designs was based on any one definite and authoritative statement; whereas the use of the phrases "channels of communication" and "authenticity of the advices" seems to point to two or more unofficial, or semi-official, reports.

2. The British Government was certainly misinformed as to the state of the Danish fleet; but Captain Beauman's correcting report arrived too late to effect any change of policy, though it may have influenced the terms of the capitulation of September 7th.

3. Canning's original instructions to Jackson laid most stress on the proposal to the Danish Government of two alternative treaties of alliance, in each of which the temporary transference of the Danish fleet was an essential condition.

4. These instructions were somewhat modified by the separate and secret avowal that the possession of the Danish fleet was "the one main indispensable object" of Jackson's mission.

5. Jackson seems to have imperilled the ultimate success of his very difficult mission, and to have needlessly irritated Count Bernstorff and the Danish Prince Royal, by demanding first and foremost the surrender

of their fleet, while the offer of alliance was relegated to a secondary place.

6. The British commanders, by limiting their occupation of Zealand to the space of six weeks from September 7th, acted as though the capture of the fleet was the sole object of the expedition. They were also of opinion that Zealand could not be held except by a larger force than they then possessed. In any case, by imposing on themselves a speedy evacuation of Zealand, they exceeded their powers, and rendered nugatory the success of the expedition.

7. Canning thereupon endeavoured, though fruitlessly, to have the occupation of Zealand prolonged, so as to realize the final aim of his policy, the formation of an Anglo-Scandinavian league.

8. His final efforts were foiled (*a*) by the persistent refusal of the Danish court even to consider his proposals; (*b*) by the refusal of Gustavus IV. to accept British military aid, whereby Sweden might have been secured against an imminent attack from the side of Denmark and Norway.

VI

A BRITISH AGENT AT TILSIT[1]

IN the foregoing article I dealt with the subject of Canning's ulterior and highly statesmanlike aims in sending the British expedition to Copenhagen in the early autumn of the year 1807. I propose in the present article to discuss the very obscure question how he acquired the news as to the designs of Napoleon and the Czar Alexander, which were matured in their famous interviews at Tilsit on and after June 25th, 1807. It is hardly too much to say that no thoroughly satisfactory explanation has ever been advanced, and that which I am about to set forth is not quite complete and convincing. Nevertheless I think it will be found to be far more satisfactory than some of the conjectures that have been hazarded.

One of these is that a British spy hid himself somewhere on the raft on which the first interviews took place. But it is clear, from the accounts of the various memoir writers who have described that scene, that the first interview was somewhat hurriedly arranged, that the raft was either one of the ordinary Niemen rafts, or (as Lejeune affirms) was hastily put together

[1] Reprinted from the "English Historical Review" of October, 1901.

by the French general Lariboisière.[1] In either case it is most unlikely that any convenient hiding-places would be left near to the central pavilion or tent, in which the Emperors met for confidential converse; and the story may be dismissed as the invention of some busybody, or possibly of the British agent who furnished news to our Government, and then sought to invest it with a halo of romance that would double its importance. It was in vain that the Opposition in Parliament sought to compel Canning and other ministers to reveal the source of their information. They stoutly refused to tell the secret; and at the close of this article we shall see that Canning had every reason for keeping the extent of his information carefully concealed; for we have documentary proof that it was not so complete as could have been desired.

Then again it has been suggested that Talleyrand played Napoleon false and yielded up the secret to English agents. This is more than doubtful. Talleyrand was not so thoroughly trusted by Napoleon as to be taken into his secrets at the first two conferences at Tilsit, and it was apparently at, or just after, these that our Government gained the news which led to the Copenhagen expedition. Lastly, it has been asserted by Dr. Bell, in his "Life of Canning," that the decisive news came not from Tilsit but from Lisbon. According to this version the Prince Regent of Portugal secretly declared to the Prince of Wales that early in the month of May, 1807, Napoleon

[1] Lejeune states that he made a sketch of the whole scene which was afterwards engraved. Unfortunately no copy of it is in the British Museum.

had most threateningly summoned the court of Lisbon and Copenhagen to side with him against England.

This seems to me incredible. It is true that the French Emperor was always putting secret pressure on those states to compel them to join his continental system and exclude British goods. But in that month Napoleon was in too precarious a position in East Prussia to venture on any threat of immediate violence on the borders of Holstein, still less on those of Portugal, where he had not as yet any means of extorting obedience. He was too good a diplomatist to attempt so much when he already had his hands full beyond the Vistula. He made his diplomatic *coups* after a great victory, not in a time of suspense and anxiety such as followed upon his sanguinary check at Eylau. Besides, if that report from Lisbon is correct, why was there no sign of urgent naval activity in our ports before Midsummer? Why was not a British squadron sent to protect Lisbon as well as to overawe Copenhagen? Why, finally, is there no mention of Napoleon's threats to Portugal in our Foreign Office archives? I have examined our correspondence with Lisbon, and can testify that no great alarm was felt there until after Napoleon's return from Tilsit, when he bent his energies to the task there agreed upon of forcing Portugal and Denmark to declare against England? We may, therefore, dismiss the notion that our ministers gained their knowledge of this resolution through Lisbon as no more tenable than the story that some English spy was hidden on the raft at Tilsit and heard the momentous words of the Emperors.

In searching through our Foreign Office records

for Russia, Prussia, and Denmark, I think that I have found a more trustworthy clue. We had at the head-quarters of the Russian and Prussian sovereigns at or near Tilsit a group of distinguished officers—Lord Hutchinson, Sir Robert Wilson, and others—besides our ambassador to Russia, Lord Granville Leveson Gower. On the first news of an armistice between Russia and France they were treated with marked reserve and were kept at a distance from the Tilsit negotiations. But with them was a British agent, Mr. Mackenzie, who was left in a more favoured position near General Bennigsen, and seems to have used his opportunities to the best advantage. From his report, dated Thuload, 23rd June, 1807, to his chief, Leveson Gower, I give the following passages:

"My Lord,—Soon after Lord Hutchinson left this forlorn quarter, young Talleyrand made his appearance and accepted the General's invitation to dinner. At first his stile (*sic*) of address was lofty, but lowered gradually as he found the temper of the company some tones higher than he had expected. Prince Lobanoff accompanied him to the other side in reply to his first question about the distance of the [Russian] force about to join the army. Duroc has been three times since at the head-quarters and received last night (as I am just informed) the Emperor's ratification of the Armistice, which is not to be annulled without a month's previous notice. . . . As Lord Hutchinson declined presenting me to General Bennigsen at the moment of his departure, and, wishing that some private friend of my own should undertake this office, Prince Troubetzkoi and D^r^ Wylie offered immediately their assistance, and my reception was at once courteous and kind, and I received, on presenting Count Woronzow's letter, a general invitation

to dinner, acceptable on more points than one, as the difficulty of procuring anything like bread is beyond conception. The formidable reinforcement of 30,000 men is arrived at Urianborg, but the disposition for continuing the struggle is not very lively here. The General declared yesterday he would undertake to beat the enemy again and again with 60,000 men, but no one replied. A French officer who accompanied Duroc observed to a Russian that all hands must now be wearied by the length and obstinacy of the campaign: if the rival Emperors wished for another let them fight together! I am told the French soldiers saluted Prince Lobanoff with loud cries of *vive la paix!* Accounts are received of six of the fourteen missing pieces of artillery having arrived on the Russian frontier with great numbers of the wounded, who it was supposed had fallen into the hands of the enemy, and likewise of 7,000 deserters being on their way to their different corps. I propose setting out for Memel the day after tomorrow, and am, etc.,

"A. MACKENZIE." [1]

We here see that a British agent was a welcome guest at the table of the Russian commander-in-chief up to the very day on which the famous interview took place on the raft; and he announces that he will leave for Memel, the port for Tilsit, on that day. He is in close touch with the Russian general, who is smarting under the slights to which his master subjected him after

[1] In a note sent to "The English Historical Review" of January, 1902, Mr. Oscar Browning states that he has been assured by General R. Mackenzie, R.A., that his grandfather was concealed on the raft at Tilsit, and brought the important news of the Emperors' secrets to London. I must still beg leave to doubt whether he did not gain the news in a less romantic way, as suggested in this article.

his blundering at Friedland. He hears the first news that there is an armistice for at least a month. What more natural than that he should glean some precious hints from the malcontent commander on June 25th? Bennigsen would be certain to know as soon as any one whether his master intended to come to terms with France. Though the Czar disliked Bennigsen, and, indeed, soon described him to Savary as a possible traitor, yet the general must have known whether it was to be war or peace. Moreover it is certain that Mackenzie left for Memel on June 25th, and that he forthwith set out for London. His letter quoted above was enclosed with Leveson Gower's despatch of June 26th, 1807, from Memel, which was received by our Foreign Office on July 16th.

In our Danish archives I also find that Mr. Garlike, British ambassador at Copenhagen, forwarded to London by the overland route through Tönning an important letter dated Memel, June 26th, which concludes thus:

"On the morning of the 14th an action commenced which lasted until 7 o'clock in the evening, when *we* were completely beaten with a loss of between 20,000 and 30,000 men. *We* were forced to retire in great confusion over the Pregel and then over the Memel River at Tilsit, where *we* passed on the 19th, having been first joined by Generals Lestocq and Kamenskoi. On the whole *we* lost near 40,000 men. After the army had passed the Memel General Bennigsen sent Prince Lobanoff to Bonaparte to propose an armistice, which has been agreed to; and yesterday an interview took place at Tilsit on a *pont volant* in the middle of the river between Bonaparte and the emperor of Russia. They separated in the most amicable

terms. As soon as the negotiations began Lord Hutchinson left the army.

I have italicised the words *we*, because their repeated use shows that the writer was a Russian officer who had taken part in the battle of Friedland, where no Prussians were engaged. He was probably in the pay of our agents, and sent off his information so promptly that his despatch, quoted above, reached our Foreign Office on the same day as Mackenzie's letter, viz., July 16th.

But what evidence had Canning that the *volte-face* of the Czar portended pressure on Denmark to compel her to shut the Baltic against us? Here our Danish archives supply the materials. Mr. Garlike, British ambassador at Copenhagen, had for several weeks been reporting to Downing Street the covert hostility of the Danes to us and their subservience to Napoleon. He had also noted with alarm the threatening increase of French and allied troops (especially Spaniards and Dutch) near the frontiers of Holstein. Ostensibly they were menacing the left flank of the Anglo-Swedish force under the King of Sweden and Lord Cathcart, about to co-operate in the neighbourhood of Stralsund. But he suspected that they would, at the first favourable opportunity, be marched into Holstein, in order to compel the Prince Royal of Denmark to declare the Baltic a *mare clausum*, and prevent the arrival of reinforcements for Cathcart.

The English envoy therefore pressed the Danish minister, Count Bernstorff, to declare that his government would repel by force any attempt of the French to occupy Holstein. Bernstorff denied that any pres-

sure was being exerted on Denmark by France; but we now know from Napoleon's "Correspondence" that he had pressed her to declare the Baltic a *mare clausum*, and was exceedingly annoyed at her allowing Cathcart's expedition to sail through the Sound, *and thus violate her seas.*[1] Garlike evidently took Bernstorff's denial as a diplomatic device; and on July 5th he wrote to Canning that the Danes were in much fear of a French military occupation; "the danger still remains, and too many precautions cannot be taken against it." This despatch also reached Downing Street on July 16th.[2]

Thus on the same day Canning received from Mackenzie, from the unknown Russian officer, and from our ambassador at Copenhagen warnings that our only remaining powerful ally, the Czar, had come to terms with Napoleon, with an effusive display that portended a Franco-Russian alliance, while the movements of Napoleon's troops on the borders of Holstein were evidently designed to drive Denmark into open hostility to England. Her leanings had of late been so notoriously favourable to France that in the Russo-Prussian treaty of Bartenstein (April, 1807), to which we were accessories, the courts of St. Petersburg and Berlin had proposed *to use force to compel her to join the coalition against France.*

It should be remembered by those who denounce Great Britain's violation of international law at Copenhagen that those governments had been the first to propose it, should it be deemed necessary. Of its

[1] Letter to Bernadotte, Aug. 2nd, 1807; also that of July 31st, to Talleyrand.

[2] Foreign Office Records, Denmark, No. 52.

necessity under present circumstances Canning could have no doubt. The defection of the Czar from the coalition, the practical certainty that Napoleon and he would now compel Denmark to shut the Baltic against British reinforcements to Cathcart, were dangers that had to be instantly faced. We have proof that Canning lost not a moment. On that same day he drew up secret instructions for Brooke Taylor, who was to proceed forthwith to Copenhagen and replace Garlike, that envoy being moved on to Memel, as though it were an ordinary exchange. In reality Canning desired to have an ambassador at Copenhagen who knew his innermost mind in regard to the new and threatening situation. Brooke Taylor was to proceed at once to the Danish court and demand an explicit statement as to its future policy towards us. A powerful British fleet would be sent at once to the Sound for the defence of Sweden and of our reinforcements proceeding to Stralsund, as well as for the protection of British commerce in the Baltic. But the new envoy was also to avow that this menacing step was taken in order to assure the friendly neutrality of Denmark and her resistance to any military pressure exerted by France. The last part of these instructions deserves quotation.

"However willing his Britannic Majesty may be to give every credit to the declaration of the Danish Minister that the attempt by France to occupy Holstein would be considered as an act of war and resisted accordingly, it cannot but be evident that the presence of a British fleet in the Baltic may be of great use in giving countenance and support to such a determination on the part of Denmark.... But for

this purpose it is requisite that the fleet of Great Britain should be decidedly superior to that of Denmark. It is for the interest of Denmark that it should be so. Her safety is to be found, under the present circumstances of the world, only in a balance of opposite dangers. For it is not to be disguised that the influence which France has acquired from recent events over the north of Europe might, unless balanced and controlled by the naval power of Great Britain, leave to Denmark no other option than that of complaisance with the demands of Bonaparte, however extravagant in their nature or repugnant to the feelings and interests of the Danish Government."[1]

A balance of opposite dangers: such is the phrase in which Canning summed up his policy towards Denmark. But the news from the Baltic soon convinced him that the balance of power in that sea would not be preserved by any mere naval demonstration. On July 22nd he wrote to Brooke Taylor a "most secret" despatch.

"FOREIGN OFFICE.

"SIR,—Intelligence reached me yesterday, directly from Tilsit, that at an interview which took place between the Emperor of Russia and Bonaparte on the 24th or 25th of last month the latter brought forward a proposal for a maritime league against Great Britain, to which the accession of Denmark was represented by Bonaparte to be as certain as it was essential. The Emperor of Russia is described as having neither accepted nor refused this proposal. . . . But the confidence with which Bonaparte spoke of the accession of Denmark to such a league, coupled with other circumstances and particulars of intelligence which have reached this country, makes it absolutely neces-

[1] Foreign Office Records, Denmark, No. 53.

sary that His Majesty should receive from the court of Denmark some distinct and satisfactory assurances either that no such proposition has been made to that court by France, or that, having been made, it has been rejected, and some sufficient security that, if made or repeated, it will meet with the same reception. I am therefore commanded by His Majesty to direct you to demand a conference with the Danish minister, and to request, in a firm but amicable manner, a direct and official answer upon these important points."

The "sufficient security" which Canning claimed was the Danish fleet. He accompanied this despatch with the draft of a secret Anglo-Danish treaty which was at once to be proposed to that Court. It stipulated that, as it was indispensable for the safety of Great Britain that the Danish fleet must be placed beyond reach of a French attack, it should be handed over to us, to be kept in pledge, until the end of the war between England and France, and that, if handed over to us, we would pay Denmark £100,000 for every year that it should be held in pledge. At a somewhat later date Canning proposed the formation of an Anglo-Scandinavian alliance which should array the forces of England, Denmark, and Sweden against the aggressions of the two Emperors. But his scheme fell through, owing to the events described in the previous article. The Danish fleet was thereupon seized by force, and Sweden finally succumbed to the attacks of Russia and Denmark.

With these later events we are not here concerned. What I have striven to show, from official sources, is the trustworthiness of the information which led to the Copenhagen expedition. It was not, as the Danes

asserted, based on idle gossip. It resulted from inquiries made by Mr. Mackenzie at Tilsit in the Russian headquarters at the beginning of the Emperors' interviews. His letter, quoted above, decided Canning to despatch a fleet and a special envoy to Copenhagen; and there is good reason to think that it was Mackenzie's interview with Canning on July 21st that led to the demand for the deposit of the Danish fleet. The wording of Canning's despatch last quoted bespeaks a personal interview rather than the receipt of a written communication. We know from Garlike's despatch of July 18th[1] that Mackenzie passed through Copenhagen on his way to London *vid* Tönning about July 10th. With ordinary good luck as to weather he would reach London by July 21st. There is no definite proof of this; but the circumstantial evidence as to Mackenzie's arrival at London with oral news from Tilsit is fairly complete.

Canning was most careful to conceal the source of his information, and to invest it with a greater importance than it really possessed. Some of his ardent supporters claimed that he knew the tenor of the secret articles of the treaty of Tilsit before he gave orders for the taking possession of the Danish fleet. This can be refuted from our archives. As late as August 4th, 1807—that is, one month after the signature of that treaty—he charged Leveson Gower to seek to discover the terms of the treaty, and whether there were any secret articles. Now it was in the secret articles, or rather in the secret Franco-Russian treaty of alliance of the same date, that the two Emperors

[1] Foreign Office Records, Denmark, No. 52.

finally agreed to summon Denmark and Portugal to declare against England. Thus, at the time when Gambier and Wellesley were off Elsinore, Canning did not know of the existence of the article which is now seen to be the final justification of his conduct. But if his knowledge was incomplete it was sufficient to prompt him to vigorous action. He knew through Mackenzie the general purport of the Emperors' plans at Tilsit; and it is clear that our agent drew his information from the quarter whence it was likely to leak out the soonest—namely, from the malcontent Russian commander Bennigsen and his *entourage*.

NOTE TO THE SECOND EDITION.—Further research has led me to modify the statements on p. 164 respecting Mackenzie's arrival in London. I now agree with a writer in the "Athenaeum" for September 27, 1902, and with Mr. Temperley in his "Life of Canning" (1905), that Mackenzie did not reach London till July 23. It is, however, almost certain that the news contained in the letter quoted on pp. 158-159 originated with Mackenzie, and that that letter, coinciding as it did with other items of news, clinched Canning's resolve to act vigorously against Denmark. In a paper read before the Royal Historical Society in November, 1905, I proved from the Admiralty records that energetic measures were adopted on July 18, 1807, fifty-one warships being then ordered to be equipped for "a particular service" under Admiral Gambier. Castlereagh, in the debate of January 28, 1808, also stated that Ministers on July 19 "took His Majesty's pleasure as to the propriety of the expedition." Everything tends to prove that the three despatches which arrived on July 16 (see pp. 159-160 *supra*) contained the decisive news. See the "Transactions of the Royal Historical Society" (1905), also the "Edinburgh Review" for April, 1906.

VII

NAPOLEON AND BRITISH COMMERCE[1]

IN this article I shall attempt to show that the policy attributed to Napoleon of isolating Great Britain from the rest of the world was only developed by him from attempts commenced by the French revolutionists; and I shall strive to estimate, as far as materials and limits of space will allow, the relative effect of the Continental System on our industrial resources, and of our Orders in Council on his empire.[2]

The belief that England's wealth was essentially vulnerable and artificial seems to have been one among the many causes which contributed to the hasty declaration of war against England in 1793 by the French revolutionists. The Girondin ministry, forced to follow the audacious lead of the Mountain both in regard to the King's trial and in foreign affairs, unwillingly proposed measures which would excite the war feeling against and in England. In an official speech to the Convention (January 13th, 1793) Kersaint, in trans-

[1] Reprinted from the "English Historical Review" of October, 1893.

[2] This article was written independently of Captain Mahan's able work, "The Influence of Sea Power on the French Revolution and Empire," though I refer to it in a note subsequently added.

mitting to it the report of the minister for foreign affairs, uttered the following significant words:

"The credit of England rests upon fictitious wealth; the real riches of that people are scattered everywhere. . . . Bounded in territory, the public future of England is found almost wholly in its Bank, and this edifice is entirely supported by the wonderful activity of their naval commerce. Asia, Portugal, and Spain are the most advantageous markets for the productions of English industry; we should shut these markets to the English by opening them to the world."

To this unreal wealth of England, which could be demolished by free trade under the tricolour, he opposes the solid strength of his own land: "France stands alone on her own industry and riches."

Brissot followed him with an exhortation to the convention to "tear down the veil which envelops the imposing Colossus of British power;" and, later on, in a last effort to justify himself for his restless policy, that scheming politician said in the course of his speech to his constituents (May 22nd, 1793):

"Throughout the whole commerce of the enemy, great opportunities were offered to us for its destruction, without fear of a dangerous return of similar evils upon our own commerce."

If such were the views, real or adopted, of Girondin leaders, it is unnecessary to quote the views of the Robespierres with whom the young Bonaparte was so long associated.[1]

It is interesting to reflect on the influence of Pitt's

[1] See, too, Sorel, "L'Europe et la Révol. Française," iii. 243-245, iv. 387.

commercial treaty of 1786-7 with France, in producing the jealousy felt by the French extremists for our industrial and commercial supremacy. In the misery and turmoil of 1789-93 that treaty appeared to be the prelude of Pitt's deep-laid conspiracy to enrich England at the expense of France. At any rate, the triumph in 1792-3 of the extremists of Paris and the manufacturing north over the men of the wine-growing south, where alone that treaty had been popular,[1] had this among its many results, that in place of a commercial intercourse approximating to free trade, France rushed to the opposite extreme of commercial prohibition. The premature attempt of 1786, made under the old monarchy, and the reaction which it caused under the republic, have done much to identify in France a prohibitive or strictly protective policy with popular government.

Bonaparte, in his skilful selection and use of all the Jacobinical ideas and aims which could establish his power, found none more ready to hand, none more popular, than commercial jealousy of England, and the determination to make our wealth our ruin. The land of Quesnay and Turgot reverted to mediaeval ideas about commerce and national prosperity. "Never had the frenzy for prohibition been more general, more popular in France than in 1800, at the time when Napoleon took the helm of affairs.[2]

Even under the old French monarchy the principle had been adopted, in the Seven Years' War, and

[1] Contrast the views expressed to Arthur Young at Abbeville, Amiens, and Rouen, with those at Bordeaux ("Travels in France," 1787, pp. 8, 9, 69, Bohn Edition.)

[2] Mollien, "Mémoires d'un Ministre du Trésor," iii. 314.

partially in the war of American independence, that if any British goods were found on board a ship, the whole cargo should be liable to confiscation. A decree issued by the French republic on October 31st, 1796, subjected all ships carrying British goods to detention and seizure; and in it there was also the same detail which was revived in the Berlin decree, that what was afterwards called a "certificate of origin" certifying that the goods were not British, was necessary to secure the ship from detention. In 1797 a decree, issued by the Council of the Five Hundred, extended this principle to the seizure of the ship conveying such goods; so that every ship laden, even in part, with British goods, was to be good and lawful prize; and it proceeded to order that no neutral vessel which should have touched at an English port, should be permitted to enter any port in the French dominions.

It is needless to say that these decrees were inoperative; but after the peace of Campo Formio (October, 1797) a great genius attempted to give them and their aims world-wide application. On the day when the treaty was signed, the following reasons for the very favourable terms accorded to his beaten foe are thus assigned by the victorious young Bonaparte in a letter to Talleyrand:

"No. 6 We have war with England: that enemy is sufficiently redoubtable. . . .

"No. 10. The Austrians are dull and avaricious: no people are less intriguing and less dangerous for our domestic affairs than the Austrians. The English, on the contrary, are generous, intriguing, and active. Our government must therefore destroy the English monarchy, or expect to be itself destroyed by the corruption

of these intriguing and enterprising islanders. The present moment offers us a capital opportunity. Let us concentrate all our activity on the marine, and destroy England. That done, Europe is at our feet."

In a previous letter to the Directory (August 16th, 1797), he had even asserted that the Ionian Isles, which he proposed to wrest from Venice, had

"a greater interest for us [France] than the whole of Italy. . . . The Turkish empire is crumbling to pieces; the possession of these islands would enable us to support it as far as possible, or to take our share. The time is not far distant when we shall find out that in order to destroy England we must seize upon Egypt."

Leaving out of consideration the melodramatic contrast which Bonaparte's Egyptian expedition was designed to present to the prosaic and oppressive rule of the lawyers of the Directory at Paris, we may notice that his aims were such as to appeal with equal strength to those prudential and money-getting instincts of the nation, which had so long been stunted. It is true that the revolutionists had once raised the cry, *Ruinons-nous, mais soyons libres*;[1] but after this ruin had been partly accomplished by the "bankruptcy of the two-thirds" in 1797, it seemed to be time to raise the fallen credit of the Directory by the destruction of Britain's eastern trade and empire.

The year 1798 seemed to offer the opportunity of ruining our export trade, which had raised us to prosperity again after the disasters of the American war. Never had French arms been so triumphant as

[1] Speech of Hérault de Sechelles to the Comité du Salut Public, August 2nd, 1793.

in 1795-7; never had British military prestige and commercial credit been at a lower ebb. We were reduced to what was really a paper currency. Our fleets had mutinied, and though they had regained their supremacy on the high seas, yet the treaty of Campo Formio bade fair to turn the Mediterranean into a French lake. France was supreme in north and central Italy; with Genoa and Ancona virtually hers, with the stepping-stones of the Ionian Isles actually her own, and with an arrangement whereby the Grand Master had secretly bargained, even before the armada left Toulon, to place Malta in French hands, it indeed seemed that France must completely outdistance her rival in the race for empire.

The aims of the expedition were thus officially formulated by the Directory (April 12th, 1798):

"Art. 1. The general-in-chief of the Army of the East will seize on Egypt.

"Art. 2. He will drive the English from all their possessions in the east, and above all destroy their entrepôts in the Red Sea.

"Art. 3. He will have the isthmus of Suez cut through, and will take all the necessary measures to insure the free and exclusive [*sic*] possession of the Red Sea for the French republic, etc."

Further articles order the seizure of Malta, etc.

The alarm felt in England when these projects became known, may be measured by the efforts put forth by our government in the east, and its comparative disregard of European affairs. Even after Nelson's great victory at Aboukir had averted all immediate danger, and when Bonaparte's return and Kléber's assassination had left the French forces under the

unskilful Menou, we were not satisfied with leaving the French troops in Egypt as hostages to fortune; but, by a convention as questionable in its wisdom as that of Lisbon (Cintra), they were brought back to France on British ships.

In the meantime we pressed on the conquest of India by our best general, while the task of aiding the Second Coalition was entrusted to the Duke of York on the very scene of his previous failures. One contrast more will suffice to emphasize the statement that the war with France, after commencing in some respects as a war of principles, was fast degenerating into a war for the possession of markets and marine trade, like so many of the eighteenth-century wars. Though the vigorous Pitt ministry left their ally Austria without any aid in the campaign of Marengo, yet the peace-loving Addington ministry pushed on the naval warfare against the armed neutrals, though nearly all Europe was thereby ranged against us. In the feverish pause which goes by the name of the Peace of Amiens, the same course of conduct is noticeable. The Addington ministry made no timely protest against Bonaparte's schemes of intervention and aggrandizement in Europe. It had secured two more colonial markets, Trinidad and Ceylon. British power in India had been consolidated by the overthrow of Tippoo Sahib.

Historians have endlessly discussed the diplomatic and technical disputes which led to the rupture of the Peace of Amiens, almost to the exclusion of commercial considerations. It is, however, capable of proof that these were the underlying causes contributing to that rupture. It was a matter of the first importance for England to have as many markets as possible open

for her goods. The recent application of steam to machinery had brought about an immense increase in the output of cotton and woollen goods, and of hardware. Thenceforth factories were no longer confined to river valleys, they were independent of water as the motive power, and could be worked with greater economy and regularity wherever coal was cheap. It is further noteworthy that the year of the rupture saw the introduction of Cartwright's power-loom into actual use, and that its immediate effect in increasing and cheapening production may be seen in the riots of the hand-loom weavers in 1805-6, and of the Luddites in 1811-12.

With political and commercial peace it was certain that the export trade would increase by leaps and bounds. Britain was clearly ahead of all other nations, and the world was becoming more and more dependent on her for a supply of cheap and excellent manufactures; but the fact that her productive energy was so rapidly increasing might be made the source of commercial ruin and social disaster, if the markets were closed against her. The peace of 1802 had been of slight benefit, for she restored the Cape, Martinique, Tobago, St. Lucia, and Minorca. The total tonnage of ships cleared outwards from the United Kingdom in the year of peace 1802 showed a decrease from the year of war 1801.[1] This was because the year of nominal peace was a year of commercial war. It was at once seen that the commercial policy of Bonaparte was to be the same as that adopted by the Terrorists of 1793.

[1] In 1801, 1,958,373 tons; in 1802, 1,895,116 tons; in 1803, 1,788,768 tons. Cunningham's "Growth of English Industry and Commerce," Appendix C, p. ii.

"He did not veil his intention rigidly to exclude Great Britain from all communication, political or commercial, with the continent of Europe, and enforced, with unexampled rigour, the decrees of the most furious of the revolutionary governors of France, which tended to prevent the reception into the territories of the republic of any article of the growth or manufacture of Great Britain."[1]

Our envoy in Paris, Mr. Merry, in an interview with M. Talleyrand, remarked that:

"The relative situation, hitherto, of the two countries, especially in regard to trade, afforded His Majesty's subjects no room to reap the advantages common to, and always expected from, a state of peace. . . ."[2]

Among the instructions given to Lord Whitworth (September 10th, 1802), No. 12 is as follows:

"You will make our interest in commerce an object of your constant attention, and will take an early opportunity to enter into discussion with the French government upon such matters arising out of the late definitive treaty of peace as may require speedy adjustment, and which may hereafter lead to arrangements of a more extensive nature for the mutual advantage of the two nations."

[1] "Reflections on the Causes of the present Rupture with France," by John Adolphus, Esq., 1803, London. The writer gives a case of the "Fame" packet, from Southampton to Jersey, obliged by stress of weather to put into Cherbourg, which was confiscated under Robespierre's law of March 24th, 1794. Mr. Merry in vain protested against the continued operation of this law, which forbade ships of less than 100 tons coming within four leagues of France, if they had prohibited (*i.e.* British) goods on board.

[2] Despatch of June 17th, 1802.

Nor was the First Consul's policy of prohibition applied only to French territory. Every annexation or extension of French influence in north and central Italy restricted the area of British trade, and that too with regions which were necessary to supply silk manufacturers with their raw material. French garrisons held Switzerland and Holland, and thus were able to impede or divert our trade with western Germany. The expedition to San Domingo again secured to France the possession, for a time at least, of an island which was then considered to be worth all the other West Indian islands; and the politic exchanges, by which the young Spanish Grand Duke of Parma became King of Etruria, promised to restore the vast district of Louisiana to its earliest explorers and settlers. In fact, the year of peace effected as much for French aggrandizement as any year of the past war had done, and British commerce was more threatened than ever before.[1]

That the Addington cabinet, which, in its desire for peace, had neglected to lodge any effective protest, was at last alarmed at the prospects of commercial strangulation, is clear from all the despatches.[2] We may cite part of the letter addressed from Paris by Lord Whitworth to Lord Hawkesbury, December 27th, 1802:

[1] Bourrienne remarks, vol. ii. chap. xx.: "The consular decrees made conquests more promptly than the sword." He adds: "She (Great Britain) was alarmed at our internal prosperity, and at the impulse given to our manufactures."

[2] See, too, the secret and confidential instructions to Lord Whitworth (November 14th, 1802). "England and Napoleon," edited by Mr. Oscar Browning.

"A project is now on foot, and is expected soon to be carried into effect, of uniting the Ligurian to the Italian Republic, by which he [Bonaparte] will acquire another port in the Mediterranean, and, what is the great object of his policy, the means of limiting the intercourse between His Majesty's dominions and the continent."

It was undoubtedly the mission of Colonel Sebastiani to the Ionian Isles, Tripoli, and Egypt, which had the effect—an effect possibly intended by the French government—of making the English government cling to Malta. The commercial significance of that mission in irritating the English government has hardly been sufficiently emphasized. No review of the evidence as to the causes which contributed to the rupture can be considered complete which omits to take notice of that mission, and still more of the official report on it, which appeared in the "Moniteur" of January 30th, 1803. The commercial news in this memorable report consists of two brief statements that the commissaries of French commerce had arrived in Egypt; but the significant sentences are those which set forth the weak state of the Anglo-Turkish army of occupation in Egypt, that "a great misunderstanding reigns between General Stuart and the Pacha," that the fortifications are dilapidated, and that "six thousand French would at present be enough to conquer Egypt." With respect to the Ionian Isles, which, by Article IX. of the treaty of Amiens, were to constitute an independent state—"the Republic of the Seven Islands"—the report of Colonel Sebastiani declares:

"I do not stray from the truth in assuring you that

the islands of the Ionian Sea will declare themselves French as soon as an opportunity shall offer itself."

The publication of this report in the "Moniteur," when the relations between England and France were already strained, had a most irritating effect. The policy of 1798 was evidently to be renewed on the first opportunity. If we lost our hold on Malta, there would be nothing to prevent a French occupation of Egypt, and possibly a completion of the ship-canal, while the alternative route, that *viâ* the Cape, was no longer in our hands, as in 1798, but was dominated by the Batavian Republic, that is, by France. With both routes to the east in hostile hands, our recent gains in India and Ceylon would be worthless, and trade with the east would be doomed.

In self-defence the British Government had to prevent one of the two routes falling into the power of the French. Egypt had already been evacuated,[1] and the Cape was again held by the Dutch. The only possible alternative for us was to hold Malta, urging in excuse that several of the conditions of evacuation had not been fulfilled. The technical reasons alleged for the postponement of the evacuation were of course scarcely justifiable in themselves; but the real facts which determined the retention of Malta were that the Cape and Egypt had been by that time evacuated by us.[2]

[1] The despatch of Lord Hawkesbury to Lord Whitworth, of February 28th, 1803, states: "There cannot be the least doubt that Egypt is at this time evacuated."

[2] Colonel Sebastiani's report could not have appeared more opportunely for Bonaparte's plans than when it did, if he had designed to make our retention of Malta the pretext for another war. Lord Whitworth's despatch of January 27th, 1803, opens

The close connection between Colonel Sebastiani's report and Britain's retention of Malta is proved by the Downing Street despatch of February 9th, 1803, to Lord Whitworth:

"His Majesty cannot therefore regard the conduct of the French government on various occasions since the conclusion of the definitive treaty, the insinuations and charges contained in the report of Colonel Sebastiani, and the views which the report discloses, without feeling it necessary for him distinctly to declare that it will be impossible for him to enter into any further discussion relative to Malta unless he receives a satisfactory explanation on the subject of this communication."

If we turn to the words which Napoleon, in the absence of Lord Whitworth, let fall at the ambassadors' audience (May 1st, 1803), we find a frank avowal of the importance of commercial rivalry in producing the rupture. Speaking of the English ministers he said:[1]

"They want to make us jump the ditch, and we'll jump it. How could a nation of forty millions consent to let another nation lay down the law for it? The independence of states must come first: before liberty, and before the prosperity of trade and manufactures. . . . To accept a modification of the treaty of Amiens is to accept the first link of a chain which will afterwards lengthen out, and will end by our complete subjection, by a treaty of commerce such as that of 1785 [he meant that of 1786-7], and in short, by the return of a

as follows: "Colonel Sebastiani returned unexpectedly two days ago, and came from Genoa with a degree of expedition which might give reason to believe that his business was very urgent."

[1] "Mem. of Miot de Melito," vol. i. chap. xiv. (Eng. ed.).

commissioner to Dunkerque. Let us cede Malta, and to-morrow our vessels will be insulted, our ships will be forced to salute those of the English, and to endure a disgraceful inspection. We shall, no doubt, have an arduous beginning; we shall have to lament losses at sea, perhaps even the loss of our colonies;[1] but we shall be strengthened on the continent. We have already acquired an extent of coast that makes us formidable; we will add to this, we will form a more complete coast-system, and England shall end by shedding tears of blood over the war she will have undertaken."

In Napoleon's correspondence we find the same views.

"If, besides the important possession of Gibraltar, England desired to preserve any other in the Mediterranean, that would be to publish openly the design of uniting the commerce of the Mediterranean to her almost exclusive trade with the Indies, with America, and the Baltic; and of all the calamities which can overtake the French people, there is none comparable to that."

So in a letter of July 21st, 1806, to the King of Naples he desires his strenuous assistance in helping him to be master of the Mediterranean—*but principal et constant de ma politique. Mais il faut pour cela que les peuples paient beaucoup.*[2]

It would be a barren and useless task to recapitulate the last stages in the rupture of negotiations and the demand for that compensation which Bonaparte had once before recognized as a set-off to his aggrandize-

[1] He had a day or two before, by a secret convention, sold Louisiana to the United States for 60,000,000 francs.

[2] "Corresp. de Napoléon," xii. 571.

ments.[1] Enough has been said to show that commercial jealousies and fears were without doubt the chief cause of the war, and that Bonaparte was still imbued with the old Jacobinical idea that England would be reduced to beggary if her chief markets were closed against her. But we may observe how he extended his "Coast System," and then finally why that system failed and involved him and his empire in disaster.

At the Consular Court parallels were drawn between the war then renewed and those of Rome and Carthage, and the moral was pointed against the modern Carthage. In one sense the parallel was correct. At no one time of the great struggle was the British government so concerned about the struggle in Europe as to assert our dominion on the high seas, and keep open at any rate our trans-oceanic markets. While Napoleon's legions were lining the cliffs of Boulogne, ostensibly for the leap across the ditch, our government kept Sir Arthur Wellesley in India to consolidate his conquest of the Mahrattas; and he did not set foot on our shores until September 1805, when the danger was over. Napoleon afterwards declared to Metternich:[2] "The army assembled at Boulogne was always an army against Austria. . . . You saw in 1805 how near Boulogne was to Vienna;" and it is highly improbable that when his empire was so ill-established he would have ventured on an invasion of England.[3] His plan

[1] Secret and confidential instructions to Lord Whitworth, November 14th, 1802, "England and Napoleon," p. 7.

[2] "Metternich's Memoirs," i. 48 (Eng. ed.).

[3] I am not convinced that Napoleon seriously intended to invade England, even by the able arguments brought together

was probably to exhaust us by making us keep on foot a great array of regulars, militia, and volunteers, while he extended his "Coast System." He had before the rupture required (March 11th, 1803) the King of Spain to strengthen his navy, and ended with the statement: "England is not asleep: she is always on the watch, and will not rest until she has seized upon all the colonies and all the commerce of the world. France alone can prevent this." The British ministry played into their astute enemy's hands by regarding the secret payment of a Spanish subsidy to France in pursuance of the convention of 1798 as an act of hostility; and the seizure of the Spanish treasure ships by our men-of-war ranged Spain against us from 1804 till 1808. After Austerlitz the "Coast System" was extended

by Captain Mahan, "Influence of Sea Power," ii. 112-114. If Marmont, Ney, and Davoust believed that the invasion would be attempted, Decrès, Bourrienne, and Miot de Melito disbelieved it. In the memoirs dictated to Montholon (iii. 385), Napoleon said: "Of all the means that could be proposed for annoying the enemy in this contest, none could be invented that would be less expensive to France, and more disastrous to England." Disbelief in the invasion was widespread in England. In a pamphlet, "Britain independent of Commerce" (London, 1808), the author, Mr. Spence, says, *ad init.*:—"It was common to hear those who disbelieved that he [Bonaparte] would make the attempt, reason in this way—'Buonaparte knows what he is about. He will never invade us; but by putting us to vast expense in precautionary preparations, and at the same time by stopping up almost every channel of our commerce, he is aware that he is doing us the most serious injury possible; and if he succeeds in cutting off our trade, God knows he will soon effect our ruin.'" [The evidence lately brought together by Captain Desbrière, "Projets . . . de Débarquement aux Iles Britanniques," 1903, vol. iii., *ad fin.* shows that up to the end of 1804, Napoleon's invasion schemes were probably a blind.]

throughout the whole of Italy, as well as Istria and Dalmatia. When Prussia had swallowed the bait of Hanover, she was, by a modification of the treaty of December 15th, 1805, required to exclude English goods from all Prussian territories. Again our government acted promptly where naval and commercial interests were concerned. It declared the coast between the Elbe and Brest entirely closed to the trade of neutrals; and on April 4th-6th it laid an embargo on Prussian ships in British waters. Hanover and the "Coast System" had separated us from a State which ought to have been an ally.

For the time it appeared that the British government was as hostile to Prussia as to France. Negotiations for peace were begun between Fox and Talleyrand; and in the first important letter sent by Talleyrand (April 1st, 1806) he wrote:

"The very instant that I received your letter of March 26th, I waited upon His Majesty, and, I am happy to inform you that he has authorized me to send you, without delay, the following answer: The Emperor covets nothing that England possesses. Peace with France is possible, and may be perpetual, provided there is no interference in her internal affairs, and that no attempt is made to restrain her in the regulation of her custom duties; to cramp her commercial rights; or to offer any insult to her flag. . . .

"The Emperor does not imagine that any particular article of the Treaty of Amiens produced the war. He is convinced that the true cause was the refusal to make a treaty of commerce, which would necessarily have been prejudicial to the manufactures and the industry of his subjects."[1]

[1] What this meant is shown in the following words of Napoleon

He proceeds to state that a temporary truce would be most inconvenient for France, inasmuch as she has accustomed herself to a state of war, and her commerce and her industry *se sont repliés sur eux-mêmes.*

Into the unreal negotiations which ensued it is not necessary to enter, further than to point out that, though the principle of *uti possidetis* was in general admitted at the outset, yet General Clarke demanded for France the retrocession of Pondicherry, St. Lucia, Tobago, Surinam, Goree, Demerara, Berbice, Essequibo, and that there should be at the Cape a port free to all nations.[1] After the Czar had indignantly repudiated the separate treaty into which his envoy, M. d'Oubril, had been lured at Paris, there was no need of prolonging the negotiations. Prussia and Russia were overthrown by Napoleon at Jena and Friedland; and by the Berlin decrees and the treaty of Tilsit, the "Coast System" became the "Continental System."

The Berlin decree (November 21st, 1806) declared the British Isles in a state of blockade, ordered that all English subjects, goods, and letters in any country occupied by French or allied troops should be seized, and a moiety of the confiscated property be appro-

(March 4th, 1806): "Forty-eight hours after the peace with England, I will prohibit foreign wares, and I will promulgate an Act of Navigation, which will allow the entry of our ports only to French ships, built with French wood, manned by a crew two-thirds French. Coal itself, and 'les milords Anglais,' shall only land under a French flag. There will be many protests, because there is a bad feeling in French commerce, but six years after there will be the greatest prosperity." ("Opinions et Discours de Napoléon au Conseil d'Etat," p. 239.)

[1] Despatch from the Earl of Yarmouth to Mr. Secretary Fox, dated Paris, July 24th, 1806.

priated to French and allied merchants to indemnify them for the losses they had sustained from English cruisers. Article 7 runs thus:—"No ship which comes directly from England or the English colonies, or which shall have been theirs, after the publication of the present decree, shall be permitted to enter any of our harbours." The first of the English Orders in Council (January 7th, 1807) states in the preamble that in answer to the French orders—

"which, in violation of the usages of war, purport to prohibit the commerce of all neutral nations with His Majesty's dominions, . . . [His Majesty] feels himself bound by a due regard to the just defence of the rights and interests of his people, not to suffer such measures to be taken by the enemy, without taking some steps on his part to restrain this violence, and to retort upon them the evils of their own injustice. His Majesty is therefore pleased . . . to order—that no vessel shall trade between ports from which British ships are excluded, and if any vessel, after being warned, shall be found continuing her voyage, she may be condemned as lawful prize."

But this was mere stage thunder to what followed. The Order in Council of November 11th, 1807, states that the previous order of January 7th had

"not answered the desired purpose, either of compelling the enemy to recall those orders, or of inducing neutral nations to interpose with effect, to obtain their revocation, but, on the contrary, the same have been recently enforced with increasing rigour;"

and therefore all ports from which the British flag was excluded, were to be considered in a state of blockade:

"all trade in articles which are of the produce or manu-

facture of the said countries or colonies shall be deemed and considered to be unlawful; and that every vessel trading from or to the said countries or colonies, together with all goods and merchandise on board, and all articles of the produce or manufacture of the said countries or colonies, shall be captured, and condemned as prize to the captors."

This was even extended to neutral ships carrying "certificates of origin" that their goods were not British. The second Order in Council of November 11th, 1807, uses the powers granted by the statute 43 George III. ch. 153, for suspending the Navigation Act during the war, to further order that the goods, wares, etc., named therein

"may be imported from any port or place belonging to any state not at amity with His Majesty, in ships belonging to any state at amity with His Majesty, subject to the payment of such duties, and liable to such drawbacks as are now established by law upon the importation of the said goods, wares, or merchandise, in ships navigated according to law; . . . and the same shall be reported for exportation to any country in amity or alliance with His Majesty."

The third Order in Council of the same date forbade a transfer or pretended transfer of a ship to neutrals, and any ship so transferred was to be lawful prize.

The bombardment of Copenhagen, the seizure of the Danish fleet, and this set of Orders in Council constituted a retort to Tilsit and the seizure of Swedish Pomerania. As the land power of our great foe increased, so our government strained all the forms of maritime law to bursting. Without stopping to point out that in the second order of November 11th the

prohibition of all articles of foreign growth was inconsistent with 43 George III., ch. 153, which only prohibited certain enumerated articles (as those of Muscovy), it is more to the point to notice that this very order led to the following French decree of December 26th, 1807:

"Observing the measures adopted by the British Government on November 11th last, by which vessels belonging to neutral, friendly, or even powers allied to England, are made liable, not only to be searched by English cruisers, but to be compulsorily detained in England, and to have a tax laid on them of so much per cent. on the cargo to be regulated by the British legislature . . . (it was therefore decreed that) all ships which had submitted to the British rules were denationalized, and good and lawful prize: and every ship sailing from or to England or any of its colonies or lands occupied by its troops was good and lawful prize."

But the present decree was not to apply to Powers which made the English respect their flag, and was to be abrogated "as soon as the English abide again by the principles of the law of nations."

The hint contained in this decree was hardly needed to fire our American kinsmen with indignation against the claims put forth in the second Order in Council of November, 1807. There is indeed room for belief that the policy of the Orders in Council was an attempt, not merely to retort on our enemies the evils of their own injustice but also to crush neutral commerce, and establish a complete maritime monopoly. That course had been almost avowedly urged in the able and vigorous pamphlet, "War in Disguise, or the Frauds

of the Neutral Flags." It pointed out the harm resulting to our commerce from the relaxation in 1798 of the rule of 1756, so that thenceforth

"European neutrals might, without being liable to capture, . . . bring the produce of the hostile colonies directly from thence to ports of their own country; and either these or the citizens of the United States might now carry such produce directly to England."[1]

The pamphlet reviews the results of these "costly indulgences" to our commerce, as also, with little variation, after the renewal of war in 1803. Re-exportation enabled the neutrals to carry French colonial goods with small delay, to France. The American ports were found especially convenient for neutrals to call at, and thence sail direct for France or Holland;[2] so that these powers had by 1805 ceased to trade under their own flags:

"With the exception only of a very small portion of the coasting trade of our enemies, not a mercantile sail of any description now enters or clears from their ports in any part of the globe, but under neutral colours. . . . They supplant or rival the English planter and merchant throughout the continent of Europe, and in all the parts of the Mediterranean. They supplant even the manufacturers of Manchester, Birmingham, and Yorkshire; for the looms and forges of Germany are put in action by the colonial produce of our enemies, and are rivalling us by the ample supplies they send, under the neutral flag, to every part of the New World."[3]

[1] "War in Disguise" (London, 1805), p. 23.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 44. [3] *Ibid.*, pp. 71, 73.

This last statement, obviously an exaggeration, coupled with the undeniable fact that the average insurance for neutrals at Lloyd's Coffee House was one per cent. less than for our own merchantmen, led to a clamour that our government would recur to the old rule of 1756 in all its severity. The Pitt and Grenville ministries resisted this, rightly considering that our manufacturers benefited by having the safe method of exporting their goods under neutral flags; but after the Berlin decree the clamour of our shippers and colonial merchants, backed up by popular indignation at Napoleon's Continental System, carried the day; and the Portland Ministry imposed in November 1807, as we have seen, the most stringent naval code ever promulgated by a civilized government. As a retort to the Berlin decree it was excessive. It was like answering a blank cartridge with a double-shotted cannon. Of its harshness there can be little question. Instead of merely preventing neutrals trading with France, it sought to compel all neutral commerce with Europe to pass through our ports, and thereby subject it to confiscation by the French.

But even this did not satisfy the demands of some British West Indian planters, who had been hard pressed by the competition of Havannah sugar and other goods carried in American bottoms to Europe. One of them complained that our government had not in 1806 chosen to avail itself of the fortunate opportunity of going to war with America.[1] The commerce of the United States had, it is true, prospered immensely from the fact of their being after

[1] Letter by Mr. Bosanquet on the Causes of Depreciation of West India Property, p. 42.

1807 almost the only neutrals in the world-wide conflict; but now they were severely injured by the new policy and retaliated by placing an embargo on all vessels in their ports, December, 1807; and later on, when equally harassed, for a time, by French naval decrees, they passed their famous Non-Intercourse Act of March, 1809.

Doubtless Napoleon had counted on the irritation which his naval decree had aroused in England, to precipitate the rupture between her and the United States. In an official note of October 24th, 1806, the French minister of Marine, Decrès, had assured the envoy of the United States that the Berlin decree did not alter the relations between France and United States shipping; and it was not till the French decree of December 26th, 1807 (in answer to ours of November 11th, 1807), that the relations between France and America were temporarily strained. Napoleon, even in 1806, counted rightly on the severity of our naval policy leading to a rupture between us and our kinsmen.

By 1809 Napoleon had achieved remarkable success in his attempts to strangle British trade, but for some important exceptions which will be considered presently. He had by the close of 1809 included Denmark, Sweden, Austria, and for a short time Turkey, in his Continental System; while the British naval policy had lost us our reputation at Copenhagen and the important market of the United States. The manufacturers of Lancashire and Yorkshire had, up to 1808, not organized any opposition to the new Orders in Council, but on April 1st, 1808, important petitions from London, Liverpool and Manchester were presented to the House

of Commons and supported by a great speech of Henry Brougham. The petition showed—

"That the annual value of British manufactures, exported to the United States of America, exceeds ten millions sterling, and that, as our consumption of produce of that country falls far short of that amount, the only means of paying us must arise from the consumption of the produce of America in other countries, which the operation of the Orders in Council must interrupt, and in most cases totally destroy. . . .

"That by the destruction of the neutrality of the only remaining neutral state, all possibility of intercourse with the rest of the world being removed, trade cannot possibly be benefited, but must necessarily be annihilated."

The evidence adduced by the merchants in support of their petition shows that the Berlin decree alone had not much affected the commerce between England and Holland or Spain,[1] and that even in France the decree had not been observed, for not one neutral ship had been condemned as a prize, though several had been detained. Another merchant, Mr. Glennie, stated that his remittances from the continent had increased between October, 1806, and November, 1807, over the previous totals for similar periods;[2] while the Berlin decree alone had not caused a rise in insurance rates on neutral ships clearing out from England to the continent. It was further contended that the Orders in Council were the cause of ruin to our commerce.

[1] On pp. 52 and 53 of the evidence a Dutch letter dated September 22nd, 1807, states that "ships touching in England are received here as before;" and "Prices meantime seem at their level, without some new difficulty or broil."

[2] Evidence, pp. 23 and 65.

Of the £12,856,551 which had represented the gross value of our exports in 1806 to the United States, only about £4,000,000 ever came back *directly* as payment; the balance of the debt was made up by the exports of those States to the continent; and it was precisely this trade which the Orders in Council would stop and therefore prevent any adequate payment for English goods sent to the States.

"While the Orders in Council continue, you must continue to be cut off from receiving remittances, and . . . you are consequently, with your own right hand, cutting off, by two-thirds, your vast traffic with America."[1]

As a result of the complaints of our merchants and manufacturers, and probably, also, of the retaliatory measures of the United States, our Orders in Council were in April, 1809, modified. The total blockade of the French and allied States was abandoned, but a still more rigid blockade was enforced on France, Holland, North Italy, and part of North Germany. We shall notice presently how our government and that of Napoleon secretly mitigated the harshness of their systems.

The petition above quoted, and also the pamphlet literature of the year 1808 shows the discouragements and exhaustion of our country. In an able "Inquiry into the Causes and Consequences of the Orders in Council" (February, 1808), the author, Alexander Baring, M.P., speaks thus of Napoleon's power:

"A union which the world never before saw, of irresistible force with the most consummate art, is em-

[1] Lord Brougham's speech, April 1st, 1808.

ployed to rear this gigantic fabric, while the total destitution of energy and genius on the other side, appears to exhibit, by such an unusual concurrence of circumstances, the hand of Providence in this extraordinary revolution."

This criticism of our government, which has been endorsed by most subsequent writers, seems natural after its failure to help its allies in the Eylau-Friedland campaign; but it is questionable whether our government was not, on the whole, justified in waging war on commercial, rather than on military considerations. Seeing that Napoleon was aiming at hermetically sealing up all foreign markets against us, was it not a measure of self-preservation that we should endeavour to burst through it wherever possible, in Sicily, Turkey, Egypt, or Buenos Ayres? In a military sense these expeditions were of little use; and certainly they offered the most signal contrasts to Napoleon's masterly concentration of power; but his policy had gradually driven us to make war for commercial purposes; and there is evidence that our expedition to Buenos Ayres, though of no ultimate service, yet at the time of its first success was highly popular at home.[1] The same Carthaginian view of warfare was noticeable in the vigour with which all the French and Dutch colonies were occupied in 1806-9; while the government regarded subsidies and occasional supplies

[1] "Thus the recent conquest in South America has been valued, not on account of any military glory which has been gained, not because its acquisition has done any serious injury to our enemy, but because the vivid imaginations of all ranks of people picture in its possession an extensive mart for broadcloth and for hardware." ("Britain independent of Commerce," by W. Spence, F.L.S., p. 3.)

of arms as a sufficient contribution to the wars in Central Europe.[1]

It is difficult to see how, even with the command of the seas and of the hostile colonies, England could long have survived the strain of the years 1807-8, had not Napoleon's Spanish blunder in the latter year opened to us a profitable commerce with South and Central America, and with some ports of the Iberian peninsula. The Portuguese colonial system had hitherto restricted our commerce with Brazil; but after the flight of the Portuguese regent to Brazil had removed the nominal government thither, the commercial friendship which had existed between the house of Braganza and England ever since the Methuen treaty of 1703 allowed a free trade with Brazil. The opening of the markets of Central and South America staved off impending bankruptcy from British merchants and manufacturers, who seized the golden opportunity of commerce with lands never before open to them. The stocks stored up at home for many a weary month were flung on the new markets, so that British and Irish exports, which had sunk in 1806, 1807, 1808 from £40,874,000 to £37,245,000 and £37,275,000 respectively, reached in 1809 the extraordinary amount

[1] The expensive expedition against Antwerp set out from our shores *after* Austria had agreed to the armistice of Znaim. Evidently the English aim was not only to make a diversion in favour of Austria, but to seize the great naval and mercantile depôt, which was then rising under Napoleon's hands. The position of Wellington in Spain was not altogether unlike the relation of Hannibal in Italy to the Carthaginian government. Wellington was more than once told by the Perceval ministry in 1809-10 that the whole responsibility of failure must rest on his own head. (Napier, book. x. chap. iv.)

of £47,371,000, and in 1810, £48,438,000.[1] But this speculative mania brought a sharp relapse in 1811. In the monthly commercial report of January, 1811, it is stated that

"confidence in the commercial world seems nearly at an end . . . In Lancashire the cotton manufacturers appear . . . to be greatly distressed, and business quite at a stand. In Manchester and other places, houses stop not only every day but every hour. . . . The trade of Birmingham, Sheffield, etc., quite at a stand, and no orders for execution there, except a few for our home consumption."

It is true that this was proved by a parliamentary inquiry to be the result of rash speculation whereby many of the goods exported to South America had to be there got rid of at a loss of twenty per cent. A civil war in South America doubtless contributed to this untoward result; but such an excess of speculation was certain to ensue wherever Napoleon's Continental System broke down in any part. The outlet was sure to be choked by an excessive export trade.

The year 1811 must be regarded as the crisis of the commercial struggle between us and our mighty antagonist. Machinery was ever increasing our productive power at home, and was displacing hand labour. Work was scarce, and bread was dear after the bad harvests of 1810 and 1811. The year closed with the Luddite, or frame-breaking, riots in the Midlands, which spread into the north in 1812.[2] The introduction

[1] Porter, "Progress of the Nation," p. 357.

[2] "The system of terrorism which prevailed had deeply impressed the committee." ("Report of the Secret Committee of Inquiry," July 8th, 1812.)

of machinery had greatly lowered the wages of cloth workers. Gaskell in his "Artisans and Machinery" (London, 1836) gives the prices for weaving a piece of cloth as follows.

	s.	d.
In 1795	39	9
„ 1800	25	0
„ 1810	15	0

But this saving of cost, though ruinous to the hand-loom weavers, was the salvation of the country at this crisis. It counteracted the increase of expense in importing British cloth goods into the continent by smuggling, by devious routes, or by the licences, which, after 1808, both our government and that of Napoleon secretly granted to traders in violation of their fiscal codes.

Probably in no other stage of Britain's industrial development could she have survived the application of Napoleon's Continental System. At an earlier time she would have been crushed by the weight of combined Europe, wielded by so powerful an arm as Napoleon's; in her present condition she would be subjected to imminent risk of starvation: but in 1803-12 the relations of her industry and agriculture to her population rendered her at once necessary to Europe, and self-sufficing at home. Malthus, writing in 1803-6, hinted at this.[1]

"A country in which in this manner agriculture, manufactures, and commerce, and all the different parts of a large territory, act and react upon each other in turn, might evidently go on increasing in riches and

[1] Book iii. chap. x.

strength, although surrounded by Bishop Berkeley's wall of brass."

The mistake of the French government from 1793 onwards, was in imagining that Britain was *solely* dependent on foreign trade. At that time she had two vast reserves of land power at home—improved agriculture, and the factory system. The improvements in farming brought about by inclosures had doubled the yield of corn and the weight of the fleece; and these inclosures of common wastes and common fields were stimulated by the high prices of the war period, until in ordinarily good years like those of 1802-7, home-grown corn nearly sufficed for the increasing population.[1] The changes in fashion from silks and satins to muslins, cottons, and woollens made at home, relieved us from dependence on the continent for clothing. Another vast source of wealth in a war period was that we no longer depended mainly, as of yore, on the carrying trade and on the export of corn. We now had, thanks to the introduction of machinery, as a chief source of wealth, the export of cotton, woollen, muslin goods, and hardware, *i.e.* of goods of small bulk, but of high value, which were therefore peculiarly adapted for secret importation into Napoleon's states. These English goods had cut the

[1] In a pamphlet on our Agriculture, the author, Mr. Preston, M.P. (London, 1814), points out that the improved breeds of cattle and sheep were ready for the market much sooner than would have been possible with the old breeds. "With *six-year-old* oxen and *four-year-old* sheep as the only stock to the market, this country would have been totally unequal to produce a supply adequate to the demand, and the war must have been closed from physical inability to continue it."

ground from under French goods in France in 1787-93. The years since 1793 had prevented any great industrial development on the continent,[1] such as had transformed England into a manufacturing country.

In the critical years 1808-11 the continent was being more and more deprived by English cruisers of the raw materials, the dyes, etc., necessary for manufactures. And therein lies the justification of the Orders in Council. The English Ministry knew that the export trade would be injured by the destruction of neutral commerce; but after Tilsit its aim was to establish a maritime monopoly, whereby the continent might be starved into revolt against Napoleon; and so it happened. The Continental Blockade strangled the Continental System.

Lenoir and Richard had in France sought to imitate our cotton manufacture. When the supply of raw cotton was cut off by British cruisers, an effort, supported by the French government, was made to grow cotton in South France and Italy; but such an artificial attempt utterly failed to meet the wants of a continent; and the prize of a million francs, offered by Napoleon for the best machine to spin flax, could not be awarded. In spite of the impulse given to weaving by the inventions of Jacquard, the productions of the

[1] After the financial depression of 1805 in France, Napoleon ordered a great exhibition of industry to be held in front of the Invalides. In the *Exposé de la situation de l'Empire en* 1806, he exclaimed: "Le moment de la prosperité est venu; qui oserait en fixer les limites?" But the industrial progress was slow. Not till 1812 was steam applied to spinning, at Mühlhausen. Chaptal ("Souvenirs," p. 279) seems to think the prohibitive system favoured French manufacture, though he admits that the tax on raw cotton was most hurtful.

French Empire were not equal to the demand. Hence the paramount necessity of having British goods even for clothing the French army. Bourrienne, sent by his master, as French envoy to Hamburg, to enforce his decrees, saw that the Continental System would provoke a general reaction against him. "The hurling of twenty kings from their thrones would have excited less hatred than this contempt for the wants of nations."[1] He proceeds to show that the wants of a continent and even of the French service led to the constant infringement of the system by private licences sold to the wealthy.

"I have mentioned that I received an order from the emperor to supply fifty thousand cloaks for the army. . . . The emperor gave me so many orders for army clothing that all that could be supplied by the cities of Hamburg, Bremen, and Lübeck, would have been insufficient for executing the commissions. I entered into a treaty with a house in Hamburg, which I authorized, in spite of the decree of Berlin, to bring cloth and leather from England. Thus I procured these articles in a sure and cheap way. Our troops might have perished of cold, had the Continental System, and the absurd mass of impracticable decrees relative to English merchandise, been observed."[2]

The ultimate dependence of the continent on English ships for colonial produce was an equally powerful factor in the reaction of 1812-14 against Napoleon. Even in the celebrated pamphlet of M. Hauterive, "De l'Etat de la France à la Fin de l'An VIII," there was a long official diatribe against our colonial mono-

[1] Bourrienne's "Memoirs," vol. iii. chap. v. (Eng. ed. 1831.)
[2] *Ibid.*, vol. iii. chap. ix.

poly, and a charge that we had fostered the taste for sugar, tea, and coffee, as a means of establishing our commercial monopoly on the needs of Europe. By 1809 the monopoly existed as a terrible fact for the Napoleonic states. The successes of Napoleon and his marshals on land, and the consolidation of Britain's empire of the seas, further differentiated the land and sea powers; and Napoleon, after giving orders to Masséna to "drive the leopards into the sea," promulgated those decrees of Trianon, St. Cloud, and Fontainebleau (August to October, 1810), which, more than any others, led to his overthrow.

In these he acted on the supposition that all colonial products hailed from British colonies. It was as impossible as it was undesirable altogether to exclude colonial products; but, in order to strike a blow at our colonies and commerce, as well as for fiscal and "protective" reasons, he imposed duties on such products, averaging about 50 per cent. *ad valorem.* The warfare against English manufactures culminated in the Fontainebleau decree of October 19th, 1810, which enacted that such goods were to be burnt throughout the French and protected lands. At this same time he had excluded American ships,[1] and it was not till too late that he recurred to a more lenient policy towards the only important neutrals. Continental industry from 1810 to 1812 was rolled in on itself.

Of the financial and social results of this extraordinary phenomenon it is impossible to speak in much detail. There was no freedom of speech or of the Press, and we learn less from the continental newspapers than

[1] The "European Magazine" for April, 1810, states that he had recently confiscated 184 American ships in France.

from memoirs published after 1813.[1] It is, however, certain that at Paris in 1811 the prices of sugar, coffee, raw cotton, indigo, etc., were about tenfold what they then were in London.[2] While continental trade was starved for want of these products, England was glutted with them; and their low price in our own land conduced to that recovery in our export trade which marked the year 1812.[3] From timid hints given by the "Allgemeine Zeitung" of 1810 and 1811, we see the alarm and discontent caused by the extension to the confederation of the Rhine of the French decrees of August to October, 1810. The French garrison at Frankfurt was called out to occupy the strategic points, and eight bullets apiece were served out to the troops, while the seizure and burning of English goods went on. In the same number is a letter of news from Cassel in the Kingdom of Westphalia:

"In consequence of the royal decree whereby the new duties on colonial products are arranged according to the example of France, and the other states of the Confederation of the Rhine, all colonial wares are so increased in price, that everywhere in Westphalia men

[1] For the exhaustion and perplexity of France in 1814 see Guizot's "Memoirs," i. 24 (Eng. ed.). For Germany see Varnhagen's "Life of S. K. Müller," p. 26 (Germ. ed.); Freytag's "Bilder der Vergangenheit," iv. 394.

[2] Raw cotton, 10 to 11 francs per lb.; sugar, 6 to 7 francs per lb.; coffee, 8 francs per lb.; indigo, 21 francs per lb. (Tooke, "Hist. of Prices," i. 311.) See too Pasquier, "Mémoires," pp. 295-6, and Mollien, "Mémoires," iii. 134, 291. Napoleon advanced 18,000,000 francs in January-March, 1811, to stave off a crisis. (Mollien, iii. 310-11.)

[3] Official value of British exports in 1811, £32,409,670; in 1812, £43,241,541.

are thinking either of weaning themselves from them entirely, or of finding substitutes for them."[1]

A little later the hope is expressed by the Hamburg Senate that if the decrees are strictly obeyed, the Emperor may be induced to listen to a prayer for their mitigation, and so avert ruin from thousands of good citizens. Low prices in England and exorbitant ones on the continent tempted merchants to pay enormous prices for secret licences, to brave the risks of smuggling, or to send goods by the most devious routes. Sugar was packed in small boxes, containing about two hundredweight each. It was shipped thus from England to Salonica, thence conveyed on the backs of horses or mules across the passes of the Balkans, and so through Servia into central Europe, or even into France.[2] The French merchants who in 1810 had rejoiced at the burning of English goods, by the end of 1811 were grumbling at the lack of raw materials; and shortly before setting out for the Russian campaign Napoleon had, in face of an approaching industrial crisis, to warn them that he knew their business better than they knew his, and that no commercial system was built up in a day.[3]

But it was in Russia that the most decisive results of the new system were seen. The effect of the Continental System had been to lower the value of the

[1] "Allgemeine Zeitung," October 28th, 1810, p. 1203.

[2] Tooke's "Thoughts and Details on the High and Low Prices of 1793 to 1822," p. 212.

[3] See Chaptal's "Souvenirs," pp. 270-280, on Napoleon's desire to control all the details of commerce. See too Miot de Melito vol. ii., p. 496, for his speech of May, 1811.

Russian rouble from 1808 to 1810 by one-fourth.[1] The reason was obvious. Russian credit depended on the export of bulky articles like timber, grain, hemp, etc., which were ill-adapted for secret or contraband trade. Her imports of colonial wares now cost her more than before Tilsit. Her gold flowed to other lands in spite of a ukase framed to detain it at home. When, in December, 1810, Alexander followed Napoleon's lead in adopting a stringent tariff, the evil was intensified. Russia suffered far more than France, where beetroot sugar was being grown with success, and where the growth of cotton was at any rate a possibility. The miseries of a single year convinced the Czar that his land could not exist in Chinese isolation; and at the end of 1811 an imperial ukase restored Russia to something like neutrality in the world-wide commercial war.

The British government saw its chance, and by the orders of April, 1812, allowed Russian ships, with some limitations, to trade with licences to British ports: but the timid recommencement of trade between England and Russia had a far more important result than the abrogation of the Orders in Council, and the restoration of activity to manufacturers;[2] for it was

[1] Kiesselbach, "Die Continentalsperre," p. 151. [See, however, an article of mine in the "English Historical Review" for January, 1903, showing from documentary evidence that British commerce with Russia was not by any means cut off until the close of October, 1810, when Napoleon's pressure on Russia became very heavy. This may have determined the Czar to break away from the Continental System.]

[2] "In one day the whole of the manufacturing counties of England, from a cheerless waste of idleness, listlessness, wretchedness and discontent, became a scene of busy, happy, cheerful

impossible that Napoleon should quietly witness the immense gap made in his system by the secession of Russia. British goods began to pour into central Europe by way of Riga; and, though personal recriminations figure ostensibly as the cause of the rupture of 1812,[1] yet the great movement of armed hosts eastwards at Napoleon's bidding was the last desperate attempt to realize the aim of 1798 and 1803.

and peaceful men" ("Edin. Rev." July, 1812, p. 216). It is true that owing to Brougham's eloquence the Orders in Council were repealed before the American declaration of war arrived; but the reviewer does not notice that the change in Russian commerce had first facilitated their withdrawal.

[1] One of these, the annexation of Oldenburg, was necessitated by the increased stringency of Napoleon's system in 1810.

VIII

BRITAIN'S FOOD SUPPLY IN THE NAPOLEONIC WAR[1]

"THERE really is, so far as I can see, nothing to inquire into. Of course, we all know there will be a rise [in the price of corn] upon the outbreak of a war; but not, I think, such as will cause anything like real scarcity or panic prices. It is sufficient for the country if it has a navy adequate for its needs, and if we have not such a navy, it is not an inquiry that is needed, but rather an impeachment of a Government which has neglected an obvious and essential duty."

Such was the conclusion of the official reply, given in the House of Commons on January 28th, 1902, to the motion for an amendment setting forth the need of an inquiry into the question of "Our Food Supply in Time of War." The reply seems to have satisfied the House, for the amendment was withdrawn. But it is doubtful whether the words quoted above will satisfy the country and will not rather tend to arouse the suspicion that our rulers are singularly heedless as to the importance of the issues at stake. The Right Honourable Gentleman, who closed his remarks with this soothing utterance, commented on the vagueness of the amendment and of the state of public opinion on

[1] Reprinted from "The Monthly Review" of March, 1902.

the whole subject. In one sense he was correct. The subject is but dimly known. But to cite this as a reason for refusing an inquiry is a somewhat strange proceeding. A business firm is not wont to shirk investigation into a subject that may one day affect its very existence because the danger is but half understood. And it is not reassuring to see obscurantist methods adopted in regard to a matter of grave national import because its issues are not at present clearly discerned, and the remedies proposed are not all of the same description.

But the charge of vagueness can be brought against others than the party that asks for inquiry. Those who pin their faith to the policy of *laisser aller* have hitherto failed to give any definite justification for the faith that is in them. All their utterances are pervaded by the tone of misty optimism that accords so well with John Bull's nature. "We've got along all right in war so far, and therefore there is no reason why we should not get on the same next time." That is his typical attitude on these and similar questions. It proves to be rather expensive when the day of testing comes; but until it is right upon him, he stolidly refuses to look far ahead and adopt precautionary measures. Herein lies the strength of the policy of "let be" on this question. It accords with the ingrained national habit of doing nothing until the need is upon us.

But there are signs that the policy of "drift" has had its day. For one thing, the confidence inspired by official optimism has waned of late. No longer do ministerial assurances carry immediate conviction; but there is an uneasy feeling that our leaders refuse inquiry because they fear the exposure of the state of

unpreparedness which would ensue. Least of all can historical students accept the very slight and misleading reference to the long war with France that was made in the whole course of the recent debate. It is indeed a general characteristic of discussions on this topic to ignore the very important evidence afforded by that war, or else to cite it as a reason why we should do nothing.

The latter course of argument is very often adopted. Exponents of the theory that corn will always come where it is wanted, even in time of war, if only you can afford to pay for it, appeal confidently to the Napoleonic War as proving that our mightiest foe, even when he had subdued the whole of Europe as far east as the River Niemen, never starved us into surrender; but that, on the contrary, we succeeded in breaking through his Continental System, and in procuring corn from the very lands from which he sought to cut off British commerce. "See there (say in effect the champions of *laisser aller*) the great Emperor by the year 1808 marshalled on his side in the great economic struggle Italy, Holland, Germany, Austria, and even Russia herself. And, as we were excluded from the ports of the United States, all the corn-producing lands of the world were closed to us. Yet grain never ceased to find its way into these islands. Does not that fact prove that, whenever people need a thing, they will get it, if they can pay a good price?"

Such is the argument. I think I have stated it fairly; and at first sight it looks quite comfortably convincing. If it be true, then a *primâ facie* case has been made out for trusting to private agencies to bring us through the far greater social crisis that the next naval war

will bring. If, however, it can be shown that those agencies did not save us from acute distress, and further that *Napoleon never sought to cut off our corn supply*, the whole question will wear a very different complexion. Let us see, then, what is the evidence of history.

It may be well to begin our inquiry by asking where the optimists of to-day have gained their assurance as to the bearing of the events of 1800-1813 on the question at issue. It can be traced back to the writings of Cobden and his followers, through them to Porter's "Progress of the Nation," and to Tooke's "History of Prices and of the State of the Currency from 1793 to 1837." As this last work is the chief armoury of the optimists it may be as well briefly to test his statement of the case. Great as are the merits of his book, it is marred by a very obvious desire to minimize the influence of war on our industries, finance, and food supply. The reason for this bias is clear. Tooke published his work in 1838, when the Free Trade movement was being vigorously started in Manchester, and he aimed at stilling the fears of that numerous class, of whom Sir Robert Peel was for some years the spokesman, as to the danger of dependence on foreign corn. The author refused to admit that the distress which quickly followed the declaration of war by the French Republic in 1793 was chiefly due to that event: as against the authority of Sir Francis Baring, he ascribed it "to an undue extension of the system of credit and paper circulation."[1] He further pointed triumphantly to the fact that after five years of war wheat was selling at Mark Lane at forty-eight shillings the quarter,

[1] Tooke, i., pp. 177, 188, 211.

and thence inferred that war alone did not affect the price of corn.

In one sense Tooke was right. War with France alone had no very direct influence on the price of bread; for she very rarely sent us corn. But he seems to have concluded that *no war* would have any material effect on the price. In making this sweeping assumption he erred in good company. During the debates of the House of Commons in November, 1800, which turned mainly on the sudden rise in the price of bread, William Pitt laid stress on the fact that in 1796-1798 bread was no dearer than it had been in 1792 before the outbreak of hostilities; and he claimed, first, that *the war* had no effect on the price of bread, and secondly, that *war* (that is, war in general), had no such effect. The passage is worth quoting as showing how even a clear and able thinker like Pitt could slide into a fallacy which was to ensnare many speakers and writers after him:

"In 1794 and 1795 the price [of wheat] was high; but in the interval of nearly three years that succeeded, that is, from about Michaelmas 1796 to Midsummer 1799, the price sunk perhaps too low for the fair profit of the farmer. How then, if the war was the cause of the dearness, did it happen that the effect, which on the hypothesis should have been increasing, was suspended during an interval of nearly three years? . . . Thus it is clear from a deduction of facts that war of itself has no evident and necessary connection with the dearness of provisions."

But events were even then imminent which showed the unsoundness of this sweeping generalization. The Armed Neutrality League of Russia, Prussia, Sweden

and Denmark, was in process of formation, and the dawn of the nineteenth century saw us at war with the lands on which we then chiefly depended to make up any shortage in the home supply. The fallacy of Pitt's conclusions was at once exposed; and it became evident that, while France was a *quantité négligeable* in our food supply, the Baltic lands were most important in time of scarcity. As soon as that source was cut off, our position became most precarious. The facts were too patent to be ignored even by official optimists, and before the close of that year, the very ministers who had stated that war did not much affect the price of corn advised George III. to issue a proclamation urging "the greatest economy and frugality" in the use of bread. The farmer-king himself set the example by ordering that none but stale bread should be served on the royal table; distillation from grain was also entirely stopped;[1] and a lavish bounty was offered to secure the importation of foreign wheat. In spite of these heroic remedies the price of wheat rose sharply, until in March, 1801, it stood at 156 shillings the quarter. Fortunately the crisis was of brief duration. Nelson's victory at Copenhagen and the assassination of the Czar Paul, broke up that formidable league, and in June, wheat sold at 129 shillings, and in December at 75 shillings.

Now what is the attitude of Tooke in face of these extraordinary facts? It is one of stolid indifference. He attributes this fall mainly to our harvest, which was one "of moderate abundance," and only admits, with evident reluctance, that the resumption of trade

[1] Distillation from grain was also prohibited in 1795-6, 1800-1, 1808-12.

with the Baltic may have been a contributory cause. There is not a word to show that he realized the magnitude of the peril to which our nation was exposed, from which we were saved only by the sublime daring of Nelson and by the success of the palace conspiracy at St. Petersburg. Indeed, the mad Czar had hit upon a truth, which fortunately was veiled from the eyes of Napoleon, that England might be forced to submit by being absolutely cut off from her chief source of food supply; but, as we shall see, the economic fallacies of Napoleon were as unknown to Tooke as were the dangers with which the savage autocrat of the north threatened England in 1801.

Pursuing his useless clue, the author again points out that the signature of peace with France did not lessen the price of bread, and that the resumption of war in 1803 did not raise it. Of course it did not. The nostility of France affected our imports of corn only when a privateer succeeded in slipping out from Dunkirk or Flushing and in carrying off a corn ship or two in the North Sea. And that happened very rarely. Our fleet then had complete mastery of the seas, and its aims were not distracted, as now would be the case, by telling off squadron after squadron for the protection of the nation's food; its action was therefore swift and decisive; it acted, as a fleet is meant to act, not in defending our own merchantmen, but in attacking the enemy's warships and cooping them up in their harbours. Thanks, therefore, to our naval supremacy and to the offensive tactics which could be overwhelmingly and immediately adopted, we drew with ease the small supply of corn that we required from Danzig, Riga, and New York.

Nevertheless, the price of wheat tended to rise, as the following prices show for the closing months of each year:

	1802.	1803.	1804.	1805.	1806.	1807.	1808.
Price per quarter	57*s.*	51*s.*	86*s.*	76*s.*	76*s.*	66*s.*	90*s.*

But any excessive rise was prevented, first, by the circumstances just described, and, secondly, by the advance of agricultural science and the enclosures of open or common fields, and of wastes and fens. That is to say, our undeveloped agricultural resources nearly sufficed for the nation's needs except in times of dearth at home and complications in the Baltic. But the year 1809 witnessed the return of lean years; also our exclusion from the grain lands of Eastern Europe consequent on Napoleon's success in bending Russia and Prussia to his will in the Treaty of Tilsit (1807). Sweden adopted the Continental System in 1809, and the close of that year found wheat at 103*s.* the quarter. That it did not sell at famine price was due to the strange fact, as to the reason of which Tooke was wholly in the dark, that in 1809, as also in the following year, Napoleon allowed, and even encouraged, the export of corn from France and Italy to our shores. The writer placidly assumes that, because corn was very scarce in England, while it chanced to be abundant in Napoleon's States, therefore it came here as a matter of course. I shall return to this topic presently, and merely call attention to the fact that, though in the year 1810 our great enemy placed two million quarters of wheat easily within our reach, yet the quartern loaf sold for fifteen pence, and nearly half the traders of Britain made compositions with their creditors.

The climax of misery came in the year 1812, when the harvests were bad all over Europe, so that Napoleon had to expend large sums of the public money to attract corn to France and keep his own people quiet while he was waging the Moscow Campaign. As a result of all these untoward causes, added to which was our war with the United States, the price of wheat at Mark Lane rose to 155*s.* the quarter, and the best Danzig wheat fetched the unheard-of figure of 180*s.* the quarter. But, again, as in 1801, the worst of the crisis was soon over. The close of the year 1812 saw Napoleon's Grand Army straggling back to the Niemen a mob of frost-bitten spectres, and the continued efforts which he put forth in 1813 served but to assure his downfall. The opening up of the granary of Eastern Europe to our ships, and the recurrence of a good harvest at home, brought wheat down to 112*s.* by the month of August 1813. And England was saved from all fear of civil war which had loomed so large amidst the Luddite riots and the widespread anarchy of 1811-12.

Here, again, we must notice that Tooke and other optimists of his school pay little heed to the gravity of the social crisis through which England fought her way; and only when we look into the monthly trade reports of those dark years, or dip into the letters or memoirs of Yorkshire families, like the Brontës, do we see how narrow was the margin between safety and disaster. The mad rush of gaunt, hungry crowds against factories, which Charlotte Brontë so vividly describes in "Shirley," is to Tooke merely a question of dislike of machinery; and he sees not the spectre of famine in the home which helped to drive those workers to frenzy. He admits that the opening of the Baltic ports

in 1813 may have had something to do with the fall in price of wheat. But in general his sense of causation in the handling of this momentous topic is lamentably weak.

It is enough for Tooke that the social crises of 1801 and 1812 ended happily, and that in 1809-10 we bought corn from our enemy. His mental horizon is bounded by the laws of supply and demand, and because those laws sufficed to carry us through the time of trial, though at an awful risk, he and his many followers entertain no doubt as to the universality of their application. Viewing history from the standpoint of theory rather than of fact, the optimistic school is blind to the many signs of national exhaustion in 1801 and 1812, and still more so to the signal good fortune which swept aside the mad Czar at St. Petersburg and lured Napoleon to his ruin at Moscow. Do the optimists of to-day cherish the hope that, if ever again we are in a similar situation, with trade stagnant and the quartern loaf selling at a florin, the miraculous again will happen? History does not always repeat itself.

For, be it noted, the problem of food supply is now infinitely greater than it was about a century ago. Lord Hawkesbury, speaking in the House of Commons on February 18th, 1800, stated that the average amount of corn imported was about one twentieth of the total consumption in these islands. That is to say, in ordinary years Great Britain could support herself for about forty-nine weeks out of the whole year. It is true that in bad years like 1800-1 and 1811-12 the home-grown supply might suddenly fall off by nearly one third; and then the country depended on foreign corn for fully twenty weeks. This amount of shortage increased

very little, if at all, during the Napoleonic war: for, as the Committee on the Corn Law reported in 1814, the progress in agricultural science, and the reclamation of large tracts of waste, or the change of inferior pasture into arable, had greatly increased the yield, and probably more than kept pace with the growth of population. Doubtless it was this exploitation of her hitherto unworked agricultural resources that enabled Great Britain to survive the strain.

But, after all, as compared with the present problem of food supply, that of a century ago was insignificant. The population of Great Britain in the year 1811 was, in round numbers, 11,970,000 souls: to-day it is about 37,000,000 souls. (The population of Ireland may be omitted as it is more nearly self-sufficing in regard to necessary food-stuffs.) The near approach to famine, then, in the years 1811 and 1812 was due to this fact, that we could not then draw from abroad the corn that was needed to feed twelve million persons for about twenty weeks of the year.

What is the case now? At present we are dependent on foreign corn for fully forty weeks of the year. The problem, therefore, is to draw from abroad enough corn to feed more than three times as many people for thirteen times as long a period per annum.[1] In view of this undeniable fact, it is difficult to see how the Right Hon. Gerald Balfour, in the official reply of January 28th, 1902, above referred to, could use these words:

[1] I here compare average years with average years. A century ago, as I stated above, the home supply generally sufficed, except for about three weeks in the year.

"It may be argued that the war risk at the present day is much greater than during the French war to which I have referred. I do not suppose that anything but experience will enable us to determine this question."

He then referred hopefully to the effect which the Declaration of Paris might have in facilitating the imports of corn by neutral vessels. But during the French War, neutral vessels were encouraged to bring us their corn—nay, at the worst crises, they were *compelled* by our warships to come to our ports and sell their corn at the high prices then ruling. Yet, for all that, we were within measurable distance of famine and civil war.

In fact, the only features of the situation that favour us more than they did our forefathers are to be found in the great extension of the corn-lands of the world, and the increase in the carrying power of modern ships. These are reassuring facts, without doubt. But, after all, the main question in time of war is how to get that corn safely to our ports. And here the problem is vastly more complicated than it was in the Great War. After Trafalgar our fleet ruled the waves to an extent that can, perhaps, never be hoped for again. The naval historian, James, summarizes the chronicles of British seamen in the years 1809-10 in the statements that the fleet in 1809 was stronger than ever it had been, or perhaps ever could be again; while in the year 1810, Napoleon was unable to get a single squadron out to sea owing to the closeness of our blockade.[1]

It is worth noting that this immense naval superiority

[1] James, vol. v. (year 1810 *ad init.*).

was to avail us little in the matter of our food supply in 1811-12, because in the very years when we ruled the sea, he controlled the land; and therefore when it did not suit him to let wheat leave his ports for England, not a corn-ship weighed anchor. The futility of mere naval supremacy in such a case could not be more forcibly demonstrated; and the fact may be commended to the notice of those who bid us trust solely to our navy. A universal and sustained resolve on the part of the Napoleonic States to withhold their corn from us would have been speedily fatal to us, even when no fleet of theirs could get out of harbour. Naval superiority, without doubt, is an important factor in the problem of food supply in time of war; but to assert that it is everything is to ignore one of the most important lessons of the Napoleonic period. The last word on this question rests with the great corn-growing lands, and not solely with the Power that rules the waves.

This leads us to inquire whether Napoleon ever formed the project of starving England into surrender. The present writer, after a prolonged study of the Napoleonic letters and of the memoirs of his chief Ministers, has failed to find any trace of such a notion. The evidence is too wide to be set forth here. But some characteristic passages from the Emperor's letters may be cited. In 1808, after sending Junot to overrun Portugal, he reproachfully bids him, time after time, to confiscate all British goods, as also American ships and cargoes, seeing that the latter were probably English.

"Seize all the colonial wares that have come into Portugal since the Continental Blockade began. . . .

You are in ignorance, I see, as to the grand aim of these measures. Thus you render the conquest of Portugal useless, and it is only for that that I conquered it." (May 10th, 1808.)

The experiment of ruining England by seizing all her exported goods did not bear good fruit in the Iberian Peninsula; and in the year 1809 we find fewer signs of Napoleon's resolve to ruin our export trade, save that Sweden was coerced into joining the Continental System. But in August-December, 1810 (that is, after the laxity of Napoleon's system allowed us to procure enough corn to tide over more than a year of dearth), the giant girded himself to the task of excluding all our goods from the Continent. A series of decrees was put in force, culminating in the ukase ordering all British merchandise to be burnt. Yet even at this time, when he was seeking to confiscate every bale of cloth that came from Yorkshire and every hogshead that hailed from our West Indies, he was anxious to *export* goods from certain favoured parts of France and Italy to England. Most instructive is his letter of August 6th, 1810, to his step-son, Eugène, Viceroy of the Kingdom of Italy.

"I am going to send you two kinds of licences for Venice and Ancona; one is the ordinary licence, and ships furnished with these licences will be allowed to export corn, cheese, and other products of the country, to Malta, England, Switzerland, Turkey, in fact everywhere. In exchange they may import dyes and other objects needed for use in the Kingdom of Italy. These licences give them immunity from the formalities required by my laws relating to the blockade. They may

import cotton from the Levant, but must make sure it is Levantine and not Colonial cotton." [1]

He further states that he wishes Italy to dispose of the surplus of her corn, and hopes that that kingdom will thus gain twenty to twenty-five million francs. That sum would be applied to reviving the marine of Venice.

Thus, at the time when Napoleon was about to order British and colonial goods (for he now assumed that all colonial goods were British) to be confiscated or burnt all over his vast Empire, he sought to stimulate exports to our shores. And why? Because such exports would benefit his States and enable public works to be carried out. We may go even further and say that Napoleon believed the effect of sending those exports to our shores would be to weaken us. His economic ideas were those of the crudest section of the old Mercantilist School. He believed that a nation's commercial wealth consisted essentially in its exports, while imports were to be jealously restricted because they drew bullion away. Destroy Britain's exports, and allow her to import whatever his own lands could well spare, and she would bleed to death. Such, briefly

[1] [See, too, his letter of July 28th, 1809, to Fouché in the "Lettres inédites de Napoleon," edited by M. Lecestre. Napoleon scolded his Minister in these terms:

"I have received a farrago, which you have sent me, on the subject of the Corn Trade, which is perfectly ridiculous. . . . It is mere political economists' chatter. Who is there in France who objects to the Corn Trade? Who opposes exportation? Not the law of the land. . . . The Administration has nothing to do with Political Economy. The principle of the Corn Trade is unvarying. Exportation begins as soon as there are outlets." See, too, his letter in the same volume, of July 16th, 1810, allowing the exportation of French corn if the harvest is sufficient.]

stated, was his creed. At that time, wheat fetched more than £5 the quarter; and our great enemy, imagining the drain of our gold to be a greater loss to us than the incoming of new life was gain, pursued the very policy which enabled us to survive that year of scarcity without a serious strain. In 1811-12 those precious exports of corn from the Napoleonic States ceased, but only because there was not enough for their own people.

In the latter year, especially, the bread-stuffs of Prussia and Poland were drawn into the devouring vortex of Napoleon's Russian expedition; and this purely military reason explains why the best Danzig sold at Mark Lane at £9 the quarter, and why England was on the brink of starvation. There is not a shred of evidence to prove that the autocrat himself ever framed that notion of cutting off our food supplies, which our Continental friends now frankly tell us would be their chief aim in case of a great war.

The aim of this paper is historical; and it is obviously impossible to review the far more complex circumstances that now constitute the problem of food supply. It may be well, however, to indicate some of the questions which render an official inquiry desirable:

(1) Whether the teachings of history in regard to the Napoleonic War justify our reliance on the Royal Navy alone to safeguard our food supply?

(2) Whether such reliance would not impose on the navy an intolerable burden of responsibility, distract its aims, and hamper those offensive operations which alone can bring decisive triumph?

(3) Whether our Government has at its disposal a

sufficient number of swift merchant-steamers, adapted to the carriage of large stores of grain, and of approximately the same speed, so as to facilitate the work of the convoying squadron that would accompany them across the Atlantic?

(4) Whether trust can be placed in the plan of neutral ships bringing corn to a neutral port near these shores, and of its being thence conveyed to our harbours on neutral or British vessels?

(5) Whether the effort to build an overpoweringly strong Royal Navy, in order to safeguard our corn supply, does not defeat its own end by inciting other Powers to make the same increase in their fleets?

(6) Whether the plan of national storage of corn would not be cheaper, because more final and more effective, than the present endless rivalry in the building of warships?

(7) Whether careful and exhaustive experiments as to the methods of storing corn would not reveal some means of keeping it so as to avert, or minimize, deterioration or decay?

(8) And, if this prove impossible, whether the stores of corn that would in course of time deteriorate, could not be used, before any deterioration set in, for the feeding of our soldiers and sailors?

(9) Whether a system of granting bounties on the growth of wheat would not also be beneficial to the country districts, and bring a feeling of added security to the nation at large?

(10) Lastly, whether the present wasteful use of the necessaries of life, the thriftlessness of a large part of our working classes, and the tendency of the sensation-mongering Press to magnify every incident,

would not create an intolerable situation in time of a great naval war, unless some precautionary measures were taken beforehand?

POSTSCRIPT.

It may be added here that a Royal Commission was appointed in the spring of 1903 to inquire into the whole subject of our food supply in time of war. The report of this Commission had not appeared when this article was reprinted.

IX

THE WHIGS AND THE FRENCH WAR[1]

WHILE engaged in historical research at the Public Record Office, the present writer sometimes had the privilege of conversing with the late Dr. Samuel Rawson Gardiner, and on one occasion he ventured to say to him that the more completely British foreign policy was examined in the light of contemporary records the better it came out. To this the eminent historian replied: "It always does: it always does."

The earnest way in which Dr. Gardiner repeated his words was singularly impressive, and all the more so because at that time a certain section of the British public, both in Parliament and the Press, was loudly asserting that our policy in South Africa had sinned against the most elementary axioms of morality, and was a disgrace to the country. While reflecting on Dr. Gardiner's words, one could not help remembering that the contrast between the steady optimism of the trained investigator and the anti-national clamour of certain politicians and publicists was, after all, no new feature in our paradoxical existence. In fact, it is difficult to name any great event in our modern

[1] Reprinted from "The Monthly Review" of July, 1902

history, however fraught with danger to the nation's welfare, which did not call forth stormy discussions that tended to lower us in the eyes of our enemies and to prolong the struggle in which we were engaged.

Long after the din of faction has been hushed, the still small voice of the investigator begins to be heard; and he, arguing from papers that were perforce kept back from the public gaze, is for the most part bound to admit that Ministers, far from being the incarnations of iniquity that the Opposition loved to depict, were plain matter-of-fact Englishmen, unequal in foresight and craft to their continental rivals, but possessing within their own limited range the qualities of honesty and humanity. Sometimes the historian is able—nay, he is compelled—to show that heated declamation impaired the force of official arguments at the crisis of difficult negotiations, and rendered inevitable the very struggle which the Opposition believed it was warding off. Or, again, he must point out that in the course of the ensuing war our foes were so encouraged by our domestic Cassandras as to persevere in a struggle against a seemingly tottering Government, and which, when too late, they found to be a wrestle with an all but unanimous nation.

It is a melancholy task, this, of going over the story of our wars as told at the time in the excited tones of parliamentary debates, and as it appears later on in the cold steady light of historical research. In the case of no country, perhaps, is the contrast so marked. Nowhere is there to be found a race more individualistic in its opinions, more dogged in its determination to "have its say" on any and every matter, and—one regrets to have to add—more ignorant of the teach-

ings of modern history. And, on the other hand, the greater the liberty of speech, the more desirable it is to withhold from publication very many of the important documents which reveal the actions and sources of information of our diplomatic agents. Consequently, while St. Stephen's is remarkable for the singular absence of anything like statesmanlike reticence, the Public Record Office is almost necessarily characterized by the opposite extreme. The archives of nearly all continental capitals are open for historical investigation within thirty or forty years; those of Great Britain are kept closed for at least double that period, save in very exceptional cases. This is, no doubt, desirable in the interests of our diplomatic service; but it should be remembered that Ministers in replying to questions, and to general attacks on their policy, are fighting with one arm tied behind them. In many cases it is only long after they have passed away that their complete defence can be given to the world.

We have now come to the period when the archives of the Foreign Office are available for historical research into the period of the Great War with France, and the present writer has been able to realize some of the disadvantages under which British Ministers laboured at that time. He has also been struck with the proneness of minds of a certain order to leap to the conclusion that their country is wrong and that the enemy is right. It will not be unprofitable briefly to set forth the facts attending the outbreak of war with France in 1793 and 1803, and then to observe the workings of the anti-national consciousness that always moves along the surface of our public life.

The causes of war with revolutionary France were,

briefly stated, these: Our Government remained entirely neutral in 1791-2 while the Courts of Vienna and Berlin were drawing up the Declaration of Pilnitz that seemed to threaten the revolutionists with intervention if they did not treat the French royal family with fitting respect; and when the Girondist Ministry forced Louis XVI. to declare war against Austria in the spring of 1792, Pitt maintained the same immovable attitude.[1] When France became a Republic in September, 1792, our Minister kept up semi-official relations with Chauvelin, the French diplomatic agent in London, until the latter was proved to be in connection with certain malcontent clubs in this country.

Matters, however, did not become strained until the French National Convention, after flinging back the Prussian and Austrian armies, proceeded to overrun the Austrian Netherlands, and to issue in November and December, 1792, a series of decrees of a generally aggressive character. The first of these promised armed assistance to any people that desired to overthrow its own Government; a sequel to this provided for the maintenance of the soldiers of liberty out of the funds obtained by the confiscation of the property of the privileged classes, and enjoined the acceptance

[1] The fact that it was the Girondist Ministry which rendered war inevitable by issuing an insolent ultimatum to the Court of Vienna was everywhere ignored by the Whigs in their discussion of this first phase of the continental war. Von Sybel ("History of the French Rev.," Bk. iii., chaps. i. and iii.) and M. Sorel ("L'Europe et la Rév. Française," Bk. iv., chap. i.) both agree that the main responsibility for this war rested with the Girondist *doctrinaires* and the scheming General Dumouriez. M. Sorel says; "Un Habsbourg ne pouvait laisser à terre le gant que lui jetait cet aventurier."

of institutions similar to those of France; and another decree declared that the rights of the Dutch Government over the navigation of the lower part of the Scheldt were for ever abolished as being contrary to the laws of nature. This last action was a direct violation of the Anglo-Dutch treaty of 1788, and of other compacts whereby we had upheld the claims of the United Provinces to control the navigation of that river where it flowed between Dutch territories. But our remonstrances respecting this matter and the subversive character of the other decrees produced no satisfactory result. Pitt, who had hitherto regarded the anarchy in France chiefly as a means of paralyzing that Power, and thereby enabling us to effect very desirable economies, now took alarm; and on December 13th, 1792, a royal message was read out to Parliament declaring that, in view of these aggressive actions of the French Convention, the militia must be embodied and other precautionary measures adopted.

Now, what was the action of the English Opposition in face of these events? Did they praise the Ministry for its past persistence in maintaining neutrality in spite of the burning appeals of ultra-royalists like Burke, and the growing irritation of the greater part of our people at sight of French aggression? Did they uphold Pitt in his determination to safeguard British interests in the Netherlands—a fundamental maxim of policy since the reign of William III.? Did they approve of the embodying of the militia and the increase of the regular forces, which the economic Premier had unfortunately *reduced in number* during the years 1791-2? Nothing of the kind. The Opposition, with a few honourable exceptions, took the very

steps that were most calculated to weaken British protests against the French decrees and to strengthen the belief of the hot-headed ignorant men, then in power at Paris, that English opinion was on their side, and that the application of the revolutionary motto, "Peace to Peoples, War to Governments," would be as easy as it had proved to be in the case of Savoy and the Netherland subjects of the Emperor.

After the King's Message had been read to the Commons, the Lord Mayor of London moved an address of thanks, commending the prudence of the Government in observing neutrality thus far, but reprobating the efforts of the French to set aside the rights of the neutral nations (especially of our Dutch allies) and to excite disturbances among other peoples. This temperate statement was hotly impugned by Lord Wycombe, who remarked that if we really were bound by the Anglo-Dutch treaty of 1788 to maintain Dutch rights over the mouth of the Scheldt, the greater ought to be the shame of Ministers who framed such a treaty. This sally was followed up by a long speech from Charles James Fox, who once more showed the warmth of his emotions, the fervour of his partisanship, and his incapacity to think or speak as a responsible leader. The Whig leader said that there "was not one fact asserted in his Majesty's Speech which was not false, not an assertion or insinuation which was not unfounded. Nay! he could not think that even Ministers themselves believed them to be true." He then scouted the notion that the French decree setting aside the Dutch rights over the Scheldt could be the cause of war, and asserted that if war was made on France it would be because she was a Republic. He next taunted

Ministers with having failed in their efforts to secure Poland from the attacks of Catherine II. "They gave away Poland with as little compunction as honour, and with the unenviable certainty that their blustering was laughed at and despised in every Court of Europe." This was the language, be it observed, of a man who might once more become a Minister of the Crown, uttered, moreover, at a time when a firm front was more than ever necessary in order to impose respect on the politicians at Paris. He was very properly blamed for breaking up the unanimity of the House; but he returned to the charge again the next day, and then made the singular statement that Ministers were much to blame *for their neutrality*—they should openly have sided with the French revolutionists.

"From the moment they knew that a league was formed against France this country ought to have interfered. *France had justice completely on her side;* and we, by a prudent negotiation with the other Powers, might have prevented the horrid scenes which were afterwards exhibited, and saved, too, the necessity of being reduced to our present situation."

So Fox opined that the revolutionary lamb should have been screened by England from the swoops of the monarchical eagles; in which case the defenceless creature would never have displayed those unfortunate aberrations towards ferocity which marked the days of September, 1792. It is strange how preconceived notions will persist even in minds above the average intelligence. And it may be noted as a general truth that when an enthusiastic person believes any country to be identified with the sacred cause of liberty, his mind straightway becomes impervious to evidence: it

falls into a series of water-tight compartments, all of which must be shattered by overmastering facts before the rules of common-sense resume their wonted ascendency. The process of disillusionment in the case of the Whigs was painfully slow. We know how Wordsworth

> rejoiced
> Yea, afterwards—truth most painful to record—
> Exulted in the triumph of my soul
> When Englishmen by thousands were o'erthrown
> Left without glory on the field, or driven
> Brave hearts! to shameful flight.[1]

And not until the French overran and plundered Switzerland in the year 1798 did Coleridge and he realize the overbearing lawless character which the French revolutionary spirit had speedily developed.

With Fox and the Whigs who followed him, the process of awakening was even slower. In fact, the history of English political thought during the course of the Great War seems to show that, as politicians are generally the first to impair national unanimity, so, too, they are the last to acknowledge their errors. They ought to have seen them early in the course of the Anglo-French dispute. The indiscreet utterances of the English Opposition were outdone by the addresses which some of our republican clubs sent over to the Convention as a welcome to the hierophants of the Age of Reason. Thus, the Newington Club, on October 31st, 1792, forwarded a grandiloquent message to the Convention congratulating that body on its warlike triumphs—"in your undertaking to deliver from slavery and despotism the brave nations which

[1] Prelude, Bk. x.

border your frontiers. How holy is the Humanity which prompts you to break their chains." On November 28th a deputation from "The Constitutional Society of London" informed the Convention that—"after the example given by France, revolutions will become easy; and it would not be extraordinary if, in much less time than can be imagined, the French should send addresses of congratulation to a National Convention of England." They backed up their words by the gift of a thousand pairs of shoes for the "soldiers of liberty."[1]

Is it surprising that, when declarations like these were heard or read at Paris, the revolutionary leaders should have believed war with Great Britain to be a light affair? The report of the Minister for Foreign Affairs read out to the Convention on December 18th, 1792, concluded with the statement that if England declared war against France—

"It will be only the war of the British Minister against us; and we will not fail to make a solemn appeal to the English Nation. We will present to its just and generous tribunal the merits of a cause in which a great nation supports the Rights of Nature, of Justice, of Liberty, and of Equality, against a Minister who will have provoked the war from personal motives."

Of a similar tenor are the closing sentences of a circular letter sent by Monge, Minister of Marine, to the seaports of France on December 31st, 1792:

[1] "Collection of Addresses to the National Convention" (London: Debrett, 1793, pp. 2-12). It gives the names and addresses of twenty-two such clubs in London.

"The [British] King and his Parliament mean to make war on us. Will the English Republicans suffer it? Already these free men show their discontent. Well! we will fly to their succour. We will make a descent on the Island: we will lodge there fifty thousand Caps of Liberty: we will plant there the sacred Tree, and we will stretch out our arms to our Republican Brethren."

And so matters came to the sword. Louis XVI. was guillotined on January 21st, 1793. Passions on both sides were thereby excited beyond hope of reconciliation; and, despite a belated attempt at negociation, the French agent was ordered to leave London. In the Convention Brissot added to his recent appeal, "to tear away the veil shrouding the colossus of British power," a passionate invocation for war, and, *by a unanimous vote*, the Assembly, on February 1st, decreed hostilities against England and Holland. Diplomatists may argue as to the unwisdom of this or that step taken by Pitt and Grenville; but it is obvious that the party schisms in England had led Frenchmen to a fatally false notion of the inability of our people to withstand the onset of the soldiers of liberty; and this misconception, which does not find a place in diplomatic correspondence, and is therefore often ignored, must be held to be a powerful factor in the events that led to the terrible cycle of war.

The declaration of war by the French Convention placed on that body the responsibility for the final and irrevocable step. But Fox and his followers were never tired of repeating that Pitt, and he alone, was the cause of hostilities. It so chanced that the Whig leader made a long speech to this effect at Westminster

at the very time when the French legislators were launching their declaration of war. In this harangue he harped on the warlike tendencies of Pitt and the pacific nature of the French counsels; he scouted the notion that Holland *was in any danger of war with France*, for the Dutch did not want war, and did not invoke our assistance! He admitted that the execution of Louis XVI. was a horrible event, and that we had received from Paris "no adequate satisfaction" respecting the Scheldt affair; but he maintained that this could not be, and was not, the real ground of our *going to war*. The real ground was that Ministers desired "the destruction of the French Republic."[1] A comparison of the ingenious arguments which he and his followers devised in order to impugn their country's policy, with the passionate impulse of unanimity for aggressive war which at that same hour swept over the French Convention, must afford some food for reflection. It illustrates the curious open-mindedness which has been developed by English parliamentary customs—or is it by English love of fair play? To whatever cause we may trace the phenomenon, it certainly must count as the gravest weakness of our public life when we are on the brink of conflict with a people possessing strong collective instincts.

Unfortunately, this habit of mind persisted through the greater part of the first war. There were certainly grave reasons for criticisms on its conduct by Ministers; but the Foxites sinned against all the dictates of good sense and fairness when (in the words of the editor

[1] Parliamentary Debates, February 1st, 1803.

of the "Melbourne Memoirs") "they never tired of denouncing the infatuation of protracted war against the irresistible movement of the age, led by the greatest genius of the time—Bonaparte." Some of them, including the young Melbourne himself, began to see the folly of this attitude; and though he, in common with all the Whigs, believed in the sincerity of the First Consul's offer of peace early in 1800—an offer which is now generally ascribed to less worthy motives—yet the young Viscount, and many others of the party, were gradually brought, by the sheer force of facts, to look on their country as the champion of ordered liberty against a hysterical and untrustworthy propagandism.

The Whig leaders, however, for the most part, refused to leave their cave of Adullam. On November 27th, 1800, when Parliament met to consider the scarcity of corn and the prospect of war with the Armed Neutrality League, the Hon. G. Grey was careful to inform our enemies, both present and prospective, that he must, in the words of Swift, liken England to a "sick man dying with the most laudable symptoms;" and, on December 1st, Sheridan proclaimed to the world that we had been cheated by our late allies, and that "Ministers never at any period since the war began sincerely wished for peace." It is difficult to see what the Opposition hoped to gain by these wanton outbursts; the division lists always showed immense majorities for the Ministry—in this case 156 votes against 35—but perhaps the prospect of a return to power was so remote as to beget in them a feeling of recklessness. Thus, again, on the occasion of a debate shortly after the signature of the Preliminaries of Peace

with France (October 1st, 1801), Fox did not scruple to say, even though the most difficult problems were to be faced before the definitive treaty could be advantageously arranged, that the present terms were not satisfactory, but that

"There was little prospect of gaining better terms of peace. He thought another year of war would have been dreadful: the poor had for the past two years been depending on alms. After the news of peace came, the price of corn fell and the people rejoiced openly. What did this prove? It only proved that the people were so goaded by the war that they preferred peace almost upon any terms."[1]

He then proceeded to rake over his old statements respecting the origin of the war, asserting that, though France declared war on us, we were really the aggressors, and he charged Pitt with being "the greatest curse of the country," because his action had led to the aggrandizement of France. Is it surprising that when Napoleon read debates like these he resolved to press hard on this much divided land? He would have been strangely generous not to have brought all his force to bear on the negotiations which were then beginning at Amiens, and which proved to be for England one long tale of surrender of her own interests and of acquiescence in his continental encroachments. We have only to look into his correspondence and speeches to see signs of the contempt which he was beginning to feel for the British Government. For our sailors and soldiers he had some respect. But what ineffable scorn rings through his spoken and

[1] Parliamentary Reports, October 29th, 1801.

written words when he alludes to our Government and our policy! He seems to have felt, after the resignation of Pitt early in 1801 and the accession to power of the makeshift Addington Ministry, that we were the safe butts of his raillery and recrimination; and the ink of the Treaty of Amiens was scarcely dry before he formulated demands for the expulsion of the Bourbon princes from our shores and the curbing of the liberties of the British Press.

This overbearing conduct, and his continued interferences in the affairs of Holland, Switzerland, and Germany, are intelligible when we read the pitiful displays of partisan malevolence that disgraced the debates at Westminster. We may take, as a typical instance, the treatment of William Pitt by part of the Opposition. He had resigned, as was fairly well known even then, because of a sharp difference of opinion with the King on the subject of Catholic Emancipation—a question on which he believed his word to be solemnly pledged. He continued, however, to give his successors the occasional support of which they obviously stood in need. Yet neither this conscientious conduct, nor the precarious condition to which Bonaparte's actions were reducing the country, saved the ex-Minister from the malice of his personal foes.

A certain Mr. Nicholls, M.P., sought to clutch at a fleeting notoriety by moving (May 7th, 1802) an address of thanks to his Majesty "for having been pleased *to remove* the Right Hon. William Pitt from his Councils." It is needless to point out that the King had received Pitt's *resignation* with the utmost concern, which, in fact, occasioned a fit of mental derangement. This was nothing to Mr. Nicholls. After pointing out that

the late war was Pitt's war, and that France had aggrandized her power thereby, he charged him with "seeking to starve 25,000,000 human beings" in Great Britain because, forsooth, after the scarce harvest in 1795, he drained the country of its specie in order to procure foreign corn. It is painful to have to add that Fox, while declining to support Nicholls' absurd motion, yet voted with the minority of fifty-two who opposed a vote of thanks to Pitt for his services to the country. Grey, Erskine, and Whitbread followed Fox on that occasion.

This, however, was almost the last occasion on which partisan malice displayed itself with all the old rancour. The feebleness of the Addington Ministry, the continued encroachments of Bonaparte on neighbouring States, and his obvious determination to build up a great Colonial Empire in Louisiana, the West Indies, Australia, and in India itself, began to open the eyes of the faction-mongers of Westminster. Only seven days after the display of personal spite just noticed, Sheridan, who embodied some of the best traditions of the Whig party, made an appeal for a national unity that would promptly grapple with the national danger. Admitting that the Peace of Amiens was "a necessary but disgraceful peace," he exclaimed:

"It is lamentable to see you all split into miserable parties when our great enemy is uniting every possible means of extending his power. The events of every day seem to call more and more for the expression of a public feeling that the time will come when French encroachments and oppression must cease, and when the voice of this country must be clearly raised against their atrocities and tyrannical conduct."

And then, adverting to the hope expressed by Ministers that Bonaparte would become mercantile and peaceful, he said: "Sir, I do not know what France will be; but I do know that she is now a hard, iron Republic."[1]

Fox did not speak on this occasion. For a time his interest in politics waned, perhaps because the retirement of his great rival from the arena robbed the game of its chief zest; or else, because his interviews with Bonaparte at Paris in the ensuing autumn impaired the impression which he had formed of him. We are also told by Romilly, who was there at the same time, "almost all the French whom I have seen entertain a very high opinion of Mr. Pitt, and a proportionally mean opinion of the English Opposition."[2]

By this time, however, the mischief was irremediable. Regarding England as *une quantité négligeable*, the First Consul pursued his plans for the establishment of a Colonial Empire and domination over neighbouring States, regardless alike of our interests and our remonstrances. And when the Swiss notables were summoned to Paris to hear and to ratify the plan of "Mediation" which he devised between their conflicting parties, he flung out, primarily to them, but really to the British Ministry, the audacious challenge:

"I tell you that I would sacrifice 100,000 men rather than allow England to meddle in your affairs. If the Cabinet of St. James uttered a single word for you, it would be all up with you, I would unite you to France. If that Court made the least insinuation of its fear that I would be your Landamman, I would make myself your Landamman."

[1] Parliamentary Debates, May 14th, 1802 (p. 822).

[2] Romilly "Memoirs," vol. i., p. 423.

And again, on February 3rd, 1803, he informed the world:

"It is recognized by Europe that Italy and Holland, as well as Switzerland, are at the disposal of France."

The same spirit breathed throughout his famous address to the *Corps Législatif*, on February 21st. Though relations between the two countries were fast advancing to a crisis, he did not scruple to declare "that England alone cannot maintain a struggle against France."

It is, of course, impossible to describe here the complex disputes which resulted in the rupture of the Peace of Amiens. Suffice it to say that every addition to our knowledge of Napoleon's secret plans shows more clearly how impossible it was for us to avoid a collision with him unless we were prepared to be excluded from the Mediterranean, and to see him installed once more in Egypt, and push on those schemes for establishing a French Empire in India, which he took little pains to disguise. The publication of the French Colonel Sébastiani's report at the close of January, 1803, was an open threat that he could, and would, regain Egypt. To this there could be but one retort on our part, a refusal to evacuate Malta for a term of ten years, which would afford some guarantee against his Oriental schemes. This refusal, of course, lent itself admirably to Napoleon's diatribes against "perfidious Albion"; and, unfortunately, some orators of the Opposition, looking at the letter of despatches, and neglecting to look at the outside facts which compelled Ministers to their present action, were so unwise as to echo the parrot cries of the Consular Court. They thereby weakened the effect which an absolutely

unanimous voice at Westminster might have produced, and must therefore bear some share of responsibility for the outbreak of war. But, after all, we can now see that it was practically impossible for the British Empire and Napoleon to exist peaceably side by side. There cannot now be the slightest doubt that he meant to drive us from India as soon as his fleet was ready.

Much of what we now know was unknown to Fox and his friends; but they knew of Napoleon's threat to re-occupy Egypt; they also knew that a French expedition had set sail for India—facts which should have showed them why our Ministry held on to Malta for dear life. Yet we search their speeches in vain for any practical and statesmanlike outlook. Discussions on despatches, varied by passionate wailings as to the increased taxation which war would bring—these are the burden of Fox's famous speech of May 24th. The following sentences are characteristic:

"As for myself I think the negotiation has been conducted ill, and that when it was broken off it might still have been brought to a happy issue. What do we now go to war for? Is it not on account of the single paper of the *ultimatum* which now lies upon that table?"

And then, after allowing that French aggressions left us in a precarious state, he painted in dark colours the misery of the people when they must yield 15*s.* out of every £ in war taxes:

"And all this for what? For Malta! Malta! plain, bare, naked Malta! unconnected with any other interest!"[1]

[1] Parliamentary Debates, May 24th, 1803. With this compare his letter of March 12th to Grey: "The war must of course

But the whirligig of time brought its revenge, by carrying this hot-headed partisan to power. After the death of Pitt, early in 1806, Fox became Minister for Foreign Affairs in the new Coalition Cabinet. An opportunity for bringing about peace with Napoleon soon seemed to present itself on the basis *uti possidetis*. This implied that we should not only keep Malta, which had seemed so worthless to Fox when in Opposition, but that we should also preserve Sicily for the Neapolitan Bourbons. Alas! The negotiation had not progressed far before Napoleon proffered a claim to dispose of Sicily as he willed. Having studied Fox's speeches in time past, the French Emperor doubtless looked to find now in the Minister the old Gallophil enthusiasm, and the same generous disregard of British interests, which had marked the leader of the Opposition. Here he erred, as foreign potentates will persist in erring. But Napoleon was not a man to acknowledge an error or forego a claim. Sicily he meant to have; and the negotiation for peace had practically lapsed before Fox breathed his last. The disillusionment of those sad months of official responsibility undoubtedly helped to break down his vital strength; and we have in the memoirs of his nephew, Lord Holland, his pathetic confession:

"It is not so much the value of the point in dispute as the manner in which the French fly from their word that disheartens me. It is not Sicily, but the shuffling

be in some sort supported; and whether you think that we should mix that support with more or less of blame of the administration, I leave entirely with your judgment." ("Memorials of C. J. Fox," edited by Lord J. Russell, vol. ii., p. 318.)

insincere way in which they act that shows me they are playing a false game."

One would have thought that so bitter an experience as this would have revealed the difficulty, or the practical impossibility, of coming to a satisfactory compromise with Napoleon. Yet in 1810 the attacks of the Opposition on the Ministry made it doubtful whether Wellington would not be recalled from the Lines of Torres Vedras. And when, in 1815, Napoleon escaped from Elba and sought to pose as the pacific ruler of a constitutional realm, the old Whig feeling in his favour led Mr. Whitbread to plead for a peaceful settlement on that impossible basis. True, he did not carry the bulk of the party with him. Wilberforce, who had voted against the war of 1803 in a speech remarkable for its unpractical idealism, now declared that "a peace with Bonaparte would be a peace only in name." And Mackintosh showed that, by breaking the convention that established him at Elba, Napoleon had forfeited all claim to consideration. Nevertheless, Whitbread carried seventy-one members with him; and we know that Napoleon's belief in the power of the English Opposition to overthrow the Ministry, if he gained one great victory, was one of the motives that led him to dare everything at Waterloo.

Even in his exile at St. Helena he retained the same ineradicable belief that the Opposition must soon defeat the Ministry, and then would come a message for his liberation. Gourgaud tells us, time after time, how eagerly the great man scanned the horizon for sails coming from Europe; and how, at every mail, his heart beat high with hope. A pathetic picture, this,

of a mighty intellect lured on to impossible enterprises by belief in the weakness of his foes, and unable to shake off the old delusions even when the shadows of death were flitting near. But far more pathetic is the thought of the ruin of our great party of reform, wrecked by partisan obstinacy, so that the cause of popular progress was thrown back for fully a generation—until wiser leaders under happier auspices reverted to a programme that was at once progressive and truly national.

X

AUSTRIA AND THE DOWNFALL OF NAPOLEON

WE have heard of late a great deal of the French, British, and Prussian versions of the Napoleonic history: but there is another side to this great and complex question, almost equally important, with which the English-speaking world is far less familiar, namely, that presented by the State Papers of Vienna and the biographies of Austrian diplomatists. I propose in the present article to refer to this side of the question.

The reason of the comparative neglect of the Viennese version of events is fairly obvious. Its story is less incisive and dramatic than that which deals with the bull-dog pertinacity of the British people in their twelve years of struggle, and it lacks the charm of a national rising which renders the Prussian and North German movement of 1813 one of the most stirring of modern historical epics. The action of Austria was almost necessarily slow and hesitating, and the very numerous class of readers who look at the history of great nations solely from the point of view of sentimental interest in the fortunes of an enthralling personality regard the declaration of war by the Emperor Francis II. against his own son-in-law as

a breach of family honour or a betrayal of a most solemn trust. It was doubtless the consciousness that this charge might be hurled against him by posterity that impaired the modicum of will power which Providence had bestowed on the Kaiser. In any case, whatever the causes may have been—whether they resulted from the weakness of Francis, or the craft of his Chancellor, Metternich, from the exhaustion of Austrian finances, or the caution born of two decades of almost unbroken military disaster, or, again, from the nascent fear that the rising tide of German nationalism might wash away the artificial barriers of the polyglot Hapsburg realm—certain it is that the Austrian foreign policy of the years 1813 and 1814 has figured in popular imagination as the incarnation of ignoble timidity and crawling opportunism. That impression has doubtless been deepened by the memory of the events that followed the shameful union of Marie Louise with Count Neipperg, the detention of Napoleon's son at Vienna, the victory of Metternich's reactionary statecraft over the visionary liberalism of the Czar Alexander, and the planting of Austria's heel on the neck of German progress and of Italian patriotism. Place all this over against the poetic martyrdom of St. Helena, and we have every ingredient needed for a brilliant contrast such as will ever dazzle superficial observers and tinge the judgement of many succeeding generations.

The spell, in fact, can never be broken except by one expedient, which is so simple that it is generally overlooked—" put yourself in the place of the Austrian leaders of 1813 and 1814." It is this which has been done by careful investigation in the Austrian archives.

Much was accomplished many years ago by careful workers like Arneth, Häusser, Hüffer, Klinkowstrom, Oncken, Wertheimer, and others. No well-informed student during the last two decades has looked on the anti-Austrian tirades of Bignon and Thiers as proving much more than the malice *prépense* with which those writers approached the intricate problems of the years 1813 and 1814. But it has been reserved for other scholars to follow in the steps of the German historians and nearly to complete the circle of proofs that tend to free Francis and his Chancellor from the charges so recklessly hurled against them. It will conduce to the clearness of this article if we limit our survey almost entirely to the most critical weeks of the two years referred to above. Every serious student of Napoleon's career now recognizes the immense importance of those campaigns, especially of Austria's declaration of war in August, 1813.[1] In fact, her decision was so momentous, that the notion that it was all carefully thought out by Francis and Metternich many months in advance is almost irresistibly alluring. This is the question which I propose to examine, supplementing the information due to German research by a few extracts gleaned at first hand from the British Foreign Office Archives.

As soon as Liverpool and Castlereagh knew of the complete failure of Napoleon's invasion of Russia, they secretly sent Lord Walpole to Vienna, with the view

[1] Alluding to the events of the summer of 1813, Prince Napoleon characteristically wrote: "Everything might still have been set right, Austria alone ruined everything—with how much duplicity we shall see." ("Napoleon and his Detractors," p. 169, English edition.)

of cementing a new coalition. The attempt to force Metternich's hand failed, and the following extracts from the envoy's official despatches of December 19, 22 and 28, 1812, will show why it failed:[1]

"The conversation [with Metternich] naturally commenced with inquiries about the late military operations and the present state of the French Army, which he considers as completely destroyed. Upon this head, the information I was enabled to afford was more circumstantial than any he had yet received. He begged me to give him a statement of the French losses in order to put General Bubna, who sets off for Paris to-night, in possession of the true situation of the army, which Bonaparte had concealed in his letter to the Emperor from Dresden under expressions of great confidence and his accustomed style of bravado and menace. . . . He [Metternich] described the situation of Austria as daily becoming more independent. He appears to feel a considerable degree of envy of the Russian successes, and still greater fear that by taking part against France the throne of Bonaparte might be shaken and his favourite system of alliance with that country enveloped in its fall."

Again, on the 22nd, Walpole reported Austrian jealousy of Russia to be very keen, especially owing to her occupation of the left bank of the Danube. Against this a protest would be lodged, as it would prevent the hoped for acquisition by Austria of lands on the south-east as a set-off to her recent losses in the west. Walpole said that he believed the Czar would consent to some means of indemnification, but he added: "The politics of Austria are essentially changed, and the person and dynasty of Bonaparte, so

[1] "F. O." Russia, No. 85.

far from being objects of hatred and destruction (*sic*), are become those of primary interest." Again he wrote, December 28th: "The preservation of Bonaparte is the foundation of his [Metternich's] fabric, and peace upon any terms he looks on as the only possible means of firmly establishing it."

Walpole further stated that Metternich advised Prussia to canton her proposed new force of 30,000 men in Silesia, but that Hardenberg and he (Walpole) had strongly opposed this step, which would have placed a great mass of Prussian and Austrian troops virtually at the disposal of the Hapsburgs; at Graudenz (he pointed out) they would be independent of French or Austrian command. Here Walpole's successes ended. He failed to dispel the jealousy of Russia, which was then the paramount force in Austrian politics; and, unable to foment the rising against the French in Illyria, Italy, and Switzerland, which he secretly discussed with Count Salis, he was finally constrained to leave the Hapsburg realm.

The despatches sent by the British ambassador, Lord Cathcart, tell the same tale. On reaching the Czar's headquarters at Kalisch in Silesia on February 22nd, 1813, he reported that monarch's great satisfaction at England's refusal to countenance Metternich's proposal for a general peace, the acceptance of which would have separated her from her allies. The interviews closed with the inevitable request for a loan of British money. On April 6th Hardenberg read out to Cathcart part of the despatch of Baron Humboldt (Prussian ambassador at Vienna), "concerning the instructions prepared for Prince Schwarzenberg. These instructions strongly recommend the principles and

provisions of the Treaty between Russia and Prussia (the Treaty of Kalisch), and clearly point out, but only as a necessary consequence, the course which Austria must follow if Bonaparte will not consent to the sacrifices required. Every endeavour had been used by Baron Humboldt to induce Count Metternich to word this part more precisely, and to put it more in the shape of a categorical demand, but he had not succeeded, altho' the draft has not yet been engrossed."

If we now turn to the sources of information already published, the impression we gain from them is the same. In Vienna itself the popular wish was for war against Napoleon; and even the court nobility held the same opinion. According to the most trustworthy accounts, however, Kaiser Franz was strongly in favour of peace, partly, no doubt, because he feared Napoleon's genius more than he disliked Russian supremacy in the Balkan Peninsula, and partly because his strong family affections were gratified at the splendour and happiness that seemed to be the lot of Marie Louise.[1] These sentiments were not overcome by all the prejudices which his consort, Maria Ludovica d'Este, cherished against the French Emperor.[2] Moreover, caution seemed to be the inevitable lot of a land from which ready money had all but vanished, and that, too, in spite of all the efforts of a paternal government to exclude foreign goods.[3]

[1] Wertheimer, "Wien und das Kriegsjahr, 1813," p. 380.

[2] Wertheimer, "Die drei ersten Frauen des Kaiser's Franz," pp. 77-133; quoted by Luckwaldt in "Oesterreich und die Anfänge des Befreiungskrieges von 1813."

[3] Beer, "Die Finanzen Oesterreichs im XIX Jahrhundert," p. 63.

Further light has recently been thrown on the course of Austrian policy in these critical months by the publication of the "Life of Wessenberg," a work which engaged the energies of Alfred Ritter von Arneth, the veteran "Direktor des Staatsarchivs," almost up to the time of his lamented decease. It is needless to say that the learned author enjoyed unique advantages for research, and that his two volumes open out new vistas into European diplomacy at the time of Wessenberg's chief activity. This diplomatist was the scion of a worthy old family in Breisgau, who entered the Austrian service, and early won the approval of his chiefs for his tact and moderation. In the early part of 1809 he represented the Hapsburg Empire at Berlin, where he failed to move Frederick William from his obstinate neutrality, even though "the popular voice was all for war with Napoleon."[1] Four years later it was Wessenberg's lot to be sent to London on behalf of a master who clung to peace when his subjects and all Europe were beginning to clamour for war. His instructions bound him to press on the Court of St. James's the proposal for a general peace. It was in vain. The Prince Regent and Castlereagh paid little heed to him, even when he pointed out that Austria's neutrality would confine warlike operations to the exhausted northern tracts, and would therefore embarrass Napoleon more than her active hostility could do. For weeks and months he pressed these arguments on deaf ears, and strove to moderate the rising tide of warlike passion in London and the society press. His letters reveal his chagrin at his position, a poverty-stricken

[1] "Johann, Freiherr von Wessenberg," by Alfred, Ritter von Arneth. Vol. i., p. 105.

envoy in a city where expenses were heavy, and a pleader for Austrian neutrality which everybody despised. On returning to Vienna he found that the eager pugnacious Stadion condemned his want of decision and firmness, but Metternich *thoroughly approved of his caution.*[1]

Was Metternich altogether straightforward in this? Or did he use the moderation of Wessenberg, as also that of Count Bubna at Napoleon's headquarters, to screen his own determination to draw the sword at the first favourable opportunity? The latter supposition is certainly tempting. In his later career the Austrian Chancellor came to be regarded as the model of suave duplicity, and the twist which he gave to the Austrian diplomatic service was so pronounced that the young Bismarck, after 1851, found that the best means of deceiving its envoys was to tell the naked truth. We may, therefore, freely admit at the outset the difficulty of seizing this political Proteus or of discovering his ultimate shape. And yet, if confidential letters and secret despatches prove anything, they prove that Metternich, in 1813, dreaded the continuance of war. In fact, he saw that it must probably lead up to the supremacy either of France or of Russia, and that in this conflict of the powerful extremities, the weak or ill-organized centre of Europe would be trampled down and ruined. "What the Emperor, our master, fears," he wrote to Floret, Austrian *chargé d'affaires* at Paris on February 18th, 1813, "is the series of convulsions by which Europe is menaced owing to the continuance of the war." And then, referring to the popular effer-

[1] "Johann, Freiherr von Wessenberg," by Alfred, Ritter von Arneth, pp. 158-166.

vescence in Germany and other dangers, he continues: "The peoples, crushed under an unheard-of load of taxation, see in war only the perspective of sacrifice for the remains of their fortunes and the lives of their children, and all to maintain only French supremacy or Russian supremacy."

The instructions which he penned for Prince Schwarzenberg, when about to set out for his embassy at Paris, harmonize with these outpourings of his secret thoughts. France and Russia are two mighty Powers, the one protected by the Rhine, the other by her frightful climate. Between these giants the Central States can find peace and safety only in a policy of wisdom and moderation. Austria must therefore desire peace; and by peace the Emperor Francis means "un état de choses basé sur un juste equilibre entre les grandes puissances et sur l'indépendance et le bien-être de celles du deuxième et troisième ordre." By equilibrium the Emperor Francis does not mean the return to an order of things which was clearly obsolete; he means that the gigantic increase of power now accruing to Russia should be balanced; and it can be balanced only by the Napoleonic Empire. There are good grounds for thinking that these instructions reveal not only the mind of the Emperor, but also the convictions of his minister, at any rate up to the close of March, 1813.

Why then did Schwarzenberg's pacific overtures to Napoleon fail? Chiefly, it would seem, owing to Napoleon's hatred of Prussia, and his rooted conviction that the signature of a disadvantageous peace would involve his dynasty in ruin. To this last topic he referred twice in his interview with the ambassador (April 9th):

"I cannot take the initiative: that would be to capitulate as if I were in a fort: it is for the others to send me their proposals." And again: "I am new, I have to be more careful not to offend public opinion, because I stand in need of it. In publishing a peace of this nature one would certainly hear nothing but cries of joy, but soon afterwards the government would be loudly blamed: I should lose the esteem, and with it the confidence of my peoples; for the Frenchman has a lively imagination, he loves glory and excitement; he is nervous. Do you know where one must look for the first cause of the fall of the Bourbons? It dates from Rossbach!" Added to this sensitiveness of Napoleon on the score of national honour, there was a second powerful motive, hatred of Prussia and desire to effect her partition. "Speaking quickly and between his teeth," wrote Schwarzenberg, Napoleon proposed to divide into three parts the lands that were left to Frederick William at Tilsit. The eastern portion should go to Poland, Silesia should revert to Austria, while the rest might serve as "indemnities."

Such was the bait dangled before the envoy's eyes. In vain did Schwarzenberg protest that his master's plans were solely "conservative." The tempting offer came again, along with the assurance of Illyria, if the Hapsburgs would leave off talking about neutrality and throw in their lot decisively with France. As for the allies, Napoleon added, "I am sure I shall beat them; they may do me harm in detail: they count on their cavalry, they know that mine is not yet formed: they will perhaps capture 3,000 men on this side, and 5,000 on that; they may do so; that decides nothing; I will manœuvre, I will make them join in a mass, I

will force them to give battle or to yield ground. I count on Danzig alone. If I lose it that will be a check; I do not count on the other fortresses."[1]

After all, then, the reasons for his not accepting Austria's friendly intervention were military. His references to French public opinion, or to England's assumed determination to effect the ruin of France by limiting her fleet to thirty ships, were designed to convince Schwarzenberg of the impossibility of peace and of the desirability of an active Franco-Austrian alliance, with a view to the destruction of Prussia. This last proposal was also made, April 7th, by the French ambassador, Count Narbonne, to the Court of Vienna. Its chief result was to increase the suspicions already felt as to Napoleon's conduct, and to lead that Court promptly to take up the rôle of armed mediation.

Yet there is abundant evidence to prove that this step was not taken as an act of defiance to Napoleon. It was looked on as such by him, and doubtless because he expected that the magnificent bribe which he had dangled before Austria would bring her to his feet in a state of cringing subservience. His miscalculation was fatal. The offer was rejected as an insult; and its decisive rejection inflicted a still deeper wound on Napoleon's *amour propre*. His "correspondence" during the summer of 1813, especially during the armistice (June 4th to August 10th), yields conclusive proof that his wrath would fall heavily on Austria; and a perception of the ill-concealed resentment which flashed out in his interviews with Metternich in the Marcolini Palace at Dresden, helped to drive Austria

[1] In full, in Oncken, "Oesterreich und Preussen," pp. 618-625.

more and more into the arms of the allies. Yet it is clear that up to the opening of the Congress of Prague (July 12th) they suspected Metternich, while Francis certainly desired an accommodation with his son-in-law if it could be arranged without harm to Austria's vital interests. In proof of this we may cite his remarkable letters of July 18th to Metternich!

"I have to thank you, chiefly, for the present glorious political situation of my kingdom. I depend on you in my endeavours to maintain it. Peace, lasting peace, is certainly that which is most longed for by every sensible man, still more by me, as the miseries entailed by war fall so heavily on the faithful dependencies and beautiful countries to which I am attached heart and soul.

"We must strive to attain this end; we have hitherto been in treaty for this; we must now go further. We must not be deceived by momentary advantages or by increase of territory. To avoid, as much as possible, everything which can be derogatory to the honour of the Emperor Napoleon, has been already so much considered that he can hardly have one sensible reason for not accepting. Henceforth in the negotiation now about to begin, you must hold fast to that which I have already declared to be the minimum, showing the Powers that they and you can obtain more by using their energies in negotiations than by coming to an open rupture."[1]

[1] See the letter in "Metternich's Memoirs," vol. ii., p. 546. (Eng. ed.) Luckwaldt, *op. cit.*, ch. 12, dates Francis' conviction that war was inevitable from the close of July. He says it was not the news of Vittoria, or the drawing up of the Trachenberg compact, but Napoleon's own unreasonableness that influenced the Kaiser's decision. I think the learned young author underrates the importance of the news of Vittoria.

He then states that even the restitution of Illyria to Austria need not, in the last instance, be a barrier to an understanding with Napoleon. The complaisant spirit evinced by his master was one of Metternich's chief difficulties, and we may well believe that Napoleon's reliance on a surrender by Francis at the very last moment was one of the influences that wrought his own will into a rigidity that was to be his ruin. As for Metternich, we have the word of Humboldt, the Prussian ambassador at Vienna, that he came to look on the Congress of Prague chiefly as a means of convincing the Kaiser that war was quite unavoidable.

With the details of the tremendous strife that ensued we have no concern; but it is of interest to notice the keen perception of the magnitude of Napoleon's error which appears in a State paper entitled "Remarks on the Armistice," which was penned at Prague on August 4th (14th?), 1813.[1] It commences thus: "La plus grande faute qu'ait fait Napoleon dans sa carrière militaire, c'était avoir consenti à l'armistice." And, after showing that, had Napoleon driven his foes in on Neisse or Glatz, he must have placed them in a veritable "impasse," it concludes, "Enfin, en commettant la faute de consentir à l'armistice, il en fit une qui lui ôtait la chance de rester le plus puissant souverain, c'était de n'avoir pas entendu les propositions de paix à Prague, à prix de légers sacrifices de son côté." It is rarely that we find a contemporary summing up the whole situation in so statesmanlike a judgement. The unknown writer saw that Napoleon was throwing

[1] Probably communicated by Gentz, who was then in close touch with Metternich. It is printed by Bernhardi in "Denkwürdigkeiten des Grafen Toll," vol. iii., App.

away the immense advantages he had gained in the spring campaign. And why? Because he would not consent to Austria's very moderate ultimatum: (1) The dissolution of the Duchy of Warsaw. (2) The reconstruction of Prussia, with the certainty of her recovering Danzig. (3) The handing back of Illyria to Austria. (4) The restitution to Germany of the northern districts annexed by Napoleon in 1810. Such were the ostensible causes of his rupture with Austria. But, we repeat, the tone of his letters to his Minister for War and his Marshals, shows that he believed he would overcome not only Russia and Prussia, but Austria as well.

The same Titanic defiance of the forces of United Europe breathes through all his acts and letters down to the very brink of the catastrophe at Leipzig. As to this, I propose to cite an account of his interviews with Count Merfeldt on October 17th, 1813, as related by that Austrian diplomatist. The version of this affair given by Baron Fain in his "Manuscrit de 1813," has been often reproduced, but it rests on no authentic basis. Fain was Napoleon's secretary, and was in a position to tell us a good deal of his master's life in these closing campaigns, but he was not present at this interview any more than at that between Napoleon and Metternich in the Marcolini Palace; and if his account of the latter affair merited Bernhardi's contemptuous verdict, "vollkommen aus der Luft gegriffen," so assuredly does his description of the Leipzig interview.

Merfeldt, on the contrary, drafted his account of it immediately, and it was sent on to London by the British envoy at the Russian headquarters, Lord

Cathcart.[1] As it has never been published in any work written in English, I make no apology for giving it here *in extenso*, merely prefacing my translation by reminding the reader that by a curious chance Merfeldt had twice before been thrown into close contact with Napoleon—first in 1797, when Francis sent him to beg for the armistice at Leoben, and again on a similar errand on the night following the battle of Austerlitz. Accordingly his capture at the close of the second day's fighting around Leipzig might well be hailed by Napoleon as a sign of ultimate triumph.

"The Emperor Napoleon sent for me on the 17th at two p.m., and after complimenting me on my efforts to take his army in the rear, and attack his communications, said he wished to send me back on parole as a sign of his esteem. After some questions on the force of the allied armies, which he assured me he had not supposed to be so large, he asked if his presence at the army had been known to us. I assured him it had.[2]—You purposed then to give battle?—Yes, Sire. —You are mistaken as to the forces I have collected here: how large do you suppose they are?—At most 120,000 men.—I have more than 200,000.[3] I believe that I have underrated your numbers. What are they?

[1] Despatch No. 108 in "F. O. Russia," No. 86. This account is practically the same as that given by Bernhardi, "Toll," vol. iii., App.

[2] The dashes show the pauses between the remarks of Napoleon and those of Merfeldt.

[3] This is a gross exaggeration. Including the corps of Reynier's disaffected Saxons, as well as the three divisions of Ney's corps, which did no fighting on the 16th, the French army did not exceed 150,000 men. Such are the estimates of Hoffman and Aster.

—More than 350,000, Sire.[1]—Will you attack me tomorrow?—I have no doubt of it, Sire; the allies, relying on the superiority of their means, will attack you day by day in the hope of thereby bringing about a decisive battle and the retreat of the French army, a result of which its proven talents might deprive us on the first days.—Will this war last for ever? It is really time to finish it once for all.—Sire, such is the general wish: and peace is in the hands of Your Majesty, it would have rested with you to conclude it at the Congress of Prague.—They were not in good faith there, they finessed: they fixed me down to a peremptory limit of time: so vast an affair cannot be finished in ten days: Austria has let slip the moment for placing herself at the head of European affairs; I would have done all she wanted, and we would have dictated the law.[2]—I cannot hide from you the fact that in Austria we think you would have closed your dictatorship by dictating the law to Austria.—But, after all, some one must have the say; let it be Austria. If you listen to Russia, she is under the influence of England, and the latter does not want peace.—I am in no wise instructed as to the ideas of my Government, Sire; all that I have the honour to say to Your Majesty I beg you to take as my ideas alone; but I know of a certainty that the Emperor, my master, has decided that in the negotiations he will never swerve from the strictest accord with the Allied Courts; he is convinced that it is to this accord that he owes the fortunate position of his affairs, and the well grounded hope of a durable peace. Your Majesty knows how the Allied Courts share the desire of bringing about this peace at the earliest possible time.—Well, why do they not accept my proposals for

[1] Merfeldt answered Napoleon in his own vein. The allies really had about 300,000 within striking distance.

[2] This is not true; for he declined Austria's demands, as stated above.

a negotiation? You see very well that England does not want peace.—Sire, I know with certainty that they were daily expecting a reply from England, whither Your Majesty's proposals have been sent, as to the setting on foot of negotiations; and they feel assured of her consent.—You will see that she will not.—England, Sire, has too much need of peace not to desire it ardently, but she desires a peace, and not an armistice, a peace which carries in its conditions the guarantee of its stability.—And in what do you suppose that this guarantee consists?—In a Balance of Power in Europe which will set bounds to the preponderance of France.—Well, let England give me back my Islands, and I will give her back Hanover: I will re-establish the "United Departments" and the Hanseatic Towns.[1]—I believe, Sire, they will hold to the re-establishment of Holland.—Oh, it will not exist;[2] it (?) would not respect flags [at sea].[3] Holland isolated would be under the dependence of England.—I believe, Sire, that the maritime principles established by England are temporary [*occasionels*] and a consequence of the war, and will cease with it; following on that, Your Majesty's alleged reasons for keeping Holland will disappear.—Well, we must come to an understanding about this independence, but that will not be easy with the principles of England.—It would be a generous resolution and a great step towards peace. —I desire it ardently. I will make sacrifices, great sacrifices even, but there are things to which my sense of honour holds fast, and which, especially in my

[1] By "Islands" Napoleon meant Mauritius, Guadeloupe, etc. The "Départements réunis" were those of north-west Germany annexed in 1810.

[2] The version in the British Archives is here followed. Bernhardi reads, "elle n'existerait pas."

[3] Probably these words "it" (*elle*) do not both refer to Holland: the latter may refer to England.

position, I could not give up; for example, the Protectorate of Germany.—Your Majesty knows too well how your influence in Germany contravenes the establishment of an equilibrium of forces in Europe to suppose that we can consolidate it again by a peace: besides, in point of fact, our alliance with Bavaria and several other confederates of the Rhenish League, and the possession that we hope to obtain of Saxony, deprive Your Majesty of a part of your allies, and we reckon that the remainder will fall away after the successes that our great superiority promises us.—Oh, as for those who do not want my protection, I give them up; they will repent it, but honour does not permit me to give up the style and quality of Protector for those who remain.—I remember that Your Majesty long ago said to me that it was necessary for the repose of Europe that France should be separated by a girdle of little independent states from the other great powers of Europe: let Your Majesty return to these just principles that you had conceived in times of calm and reflection: and you will assure the welfare of Europe."

(The Emperor did not reply in the negative to this observation, and there followed a short space of silence which he interrupted by the exclamation):

"Well, we will see: but all that will not bring us to peace; how negotiate with England which wishes to impose on me her law that I shall not build more than thirty ships-of-the-line in a year in my ports? The English themselves feel that this condition is so inadmissible that they have not yet dared to articulate it, but I know it is their intention to do so.[1]—

[1] Where Napoleon got this notion from the present writer has not been able to find out. There had evidently been some talk of it, but wholly of an unofficial character; for Castlereagh wrote

Sire, all through this conversation I have supposed that the aim of the Allied Powers in this war was the re-establishment of the equilibrium of Europe: England cannot avoid seeing that with the extent of the coasts that Your Majesty possesses from the Adriatic to the North Sea, you would in a few years possess a navy double and triple that of Great Britain, and with the talents and activity of Your Majesty, the results are easy to calculate: how obviate this impending superiority but by fixing the number of ships of war to be built in French ports,—unless Your Majesty return to the stipulations that you yourself established on becoming the head of the kingdom of Italy, to wit, the restoration of independence to that land for the continental and general peace? I am not aware that Your Majesty has ever published anything which revoked that law which you yourself imposed on yourself. It would be a fine thing to offer for the tranquillity of Europe what Europe would consider a generous sacrifice, instead of incurring the dishonour that Your Majesty justly attaches to the law that would limit the number of French ships of war. You would have all the glory of this peace, and after having attained the highest degree of military glory peace would give you the time to complete all the splendid undertakings that you have commenced in France, and to bring about the welfare of your empire, which your glory cannot but cost rather dear."

(The Emperor agrees that this condition would be more admissible):

to Lord Aberdeen, then at Frankfurt, on November 13th, 1813: "We don't want to impose any dishonourable condition upon France, which limiting the number of her ships would be, but she must not be left in possession of this port [Antwerp]. Consider this as the object beyond all others, so far as concerns British interests." The limitations of the French navy may have been suggested in English newspapers.

"In any case, he added, I will not hold to (?) the re-establishment of the ancient order of things in Italy. That country, united under a single sovereign, would suit a general system of European policy.—As to the Duchy of Warsaw, Your Majesty has given it up, I suppose.—Oh, yes; I have offered to do so, and they have not thought fit to accept my offer.—Spain might still be an apple of discord.—No, replied the Emperor, Spain is a dynastic object (*un objet de dynastie*).—Yes, Sire, but I think that all the belligerent Powers have not the same interest in the same dynasty.—I have been obliged to abandon Spain. That question is thereby settled.—It seems, then, I replied, that peace ought to be possible.—Well, send me some one that I can trust, and we shall be able to come to a settlement. I am accused of always proposing armistices; I therefore do not propose one; but you will agree that it would be a great gain on the score of humanity; if they wish, I will retire behind the Saale; the Russians and Prussians behind the Elbe; you into Bohemia; and poor Saxony, which has suffered so much, will remain neutral.—We could scarcely do without Saxony for our victuals, if indeed we did not cherish the hope (seeing our superiority) of seeing Your Majesty pass the Rhine this autumn again; it could never suit the allies to see Your Majesty established by an armistice on this side of it.—For that to happen I must lose a battle. That may come to pass; but it has not as yet."

Here Merfeldt's account breaks off; he says nothing about Napoleon's sending a letter to the Emperor Francis, then at the allied headquarters. We know, however, from other sources, that the sovereigns took no notice of his proposal; they felt sure of victory, and obviously their best plan was to leave their great adversary in doubt whether they would not, even now, meet him half-way. It is even possible that Napoleon's

belief in the good fortune that had hitherto attended his dealings with Merfeldt prompted him to put a bold front on affairs and to remain in a position that was, in a strictly military sense, highly dangerous. The recently published memoirs of the Dutch General, Dedem de Gelder, show that the more independent minds in his army believed his unaccountable delay outside Leipzig to be the chief cause of disaster on the third day of that trilogy of war.

The Völkerschlacht was the end of Napoleonic domination in Germany. Yet, even so, when the fever-stricken remnant of his army was staggering across the Rhine, the allies sent to him the famous Frankfurt overtures, offering to leave him in possession of the "natural frontiers." This was, in effect, a reply to his proposals made through Merfeldt on the eve of his overthrow at Leipzig. That event had closed his trans-Rhenish career. But the allies were by no means agreed as to the need of further weakening his power. However much Arndt and the North German patriots might assert that the *Sprachgrenze*, and not the Rhine, was the true boundary between France and the Father-land, Kaiser Franz and Metternich insisted on the need of caution and moderation; and the documents recently published by Dr. August Fournier in his work, "Der Congress von Châtillon," prove that once again Austrian influence was exerted on behalf of a compromise that would leave Napoleon in equipoise to Alexander.

Metternich's letters to Hudelist, printed in the Appendix to that work, show that the Austrian Chancellor had no great hope of an accommodation, and he once or twice referred to the solution of affairs as

being only discoverable at Paris. But this was after Napoleon's long silence, and when his final rather ambiguous reply rendered such a hope precarious. The evidence now before us also shows that Schwarzenberg, the Commander of the allied grand army, longed for the end of the war, and that King Frederick William believed Austrian tardiness to be the result, not of nervousness, but of deliberate bad faith. I must refer my readers to Dr. Fournier's work if they desire to unravel the political tangles of the allied campaign of 1814. Limits of space admit of only one more reference, which is given here because it throws light on Napoleon's mental condition at the climax of the struggle.

This episode is the meeting of Napoleon and Wessenberg, amidst circumstances curiously resembling those of the Merfeldt interview near Leipzig. Once again the French Emperor's quenchless optimism spurred him on to an enterprise that seemed about to snatch victory from the very jaws of disaster; once again the allies (or the more daring spirits at their headquarters) were preparing to profit by his overweening confidence and deal the fatal blow; and once again the capture of a Viennese official enabled him to send to his father-in-law, Francis II, proposals that promised to detach Austria from that ill-knit confederacy.

While Napoleon was striking at the communications of the allied grand army on the Upper Marne, and while the Czar and Blücher, further to the north, were driving their columns through the plains of Champagne against the now uncovered capital of the French Empire, chance put Wessenberg in the great warrior's power. That envoy was journeying from London to

the headquarters of Kaiser Franz when, after leaving Nancy, he was suddenly immersed in the refluent surge of Napoleon's war, was captured and plundered by Hussars, and ultimately taken to the Emperor's headquarters at St. Dizier (March 28th). He was at once set at liberty, the great man cordially remarking that Austria had never detained French envoys in the like circumstances, though Prussia and Russia had done so, thereby embittering the whole war. The French people had also learnt to distinguish the Austrian troops from the barbarous Prussians and Russians, whose atrocities had done the allied cause infinite harm by convincing the French that the war was a national war. Desperation and thirst for revenge would therefore bring millions (*sic*) into his (Napoleon's) service. Having thus manifested his regard for Austria, the Emperor next strove to show how different her interests were from those of her allies. I here give a literal translation of his conversation as reported by Wessenberg:

"Tell your Kaiser as from me that I am ready to conclude peace. I do not even hide from you the fact that in order to gain peace, my position, and still more that of my peoples, imposes great sacrifices on me. I am ready to offer them to you. I have given up all Spain, I renounce Germany, Italy, and Switzerland. I will recognize the Prince of Orange in Holland, although I would rather have seen a new Republic in that land. I will restore to Holland all her possessions on the right bank of the Rhine and Meuse. I have asked that France should be left with the frontiers that I found on my accession to the throne.[1]

[1] That is to say, he now accedes to the Frankfurt terms to which he had delayed giving a timely assent. At the Congress

"I do not assert that I might not also be compelled to conclude peace on even more unfavourable terms, for the matter must be ended now once for all. I insisted on retaining Antwerp; for without that place France will not so soon possess a new navy. I am ready to give up all the colonies if by this sacrifice I can keep the mouth of the Scheldt for France. England would not insist on my ceding Antwerp if Austria did not support her in this matter."

He then went over the familiar argument that it was not to Austria's interest to drive matters to the bitter end. She had gained all that she could expect in Poland, Germany, and Italy, and thereafter Russia and Prussia would profit most by the coalition. "Perhaps, he added, "the time will come when Austria will stand in need of me," a prophecy that was to be in one sense startlingly fulfilled by the Anglo-Austro-French secret alliance of December of that very year. Then, turning to the family considerations to which his Corsican interests led him to attach such weight, he added: "Can Metternich forget that my marriage with an Austrian archduchess is his work? Your Kaiser seems to have no love for his daughter. If he loved her he could not show such a lack of feeling for her sorrows. I made a bad mistake when I married her. Had I married a Russian princess I should not be where I now am." He, however, assured Wessenberg that Marie Louise was "an incomparable wife," and

of Châtillon the allies had now laid it down, as the *sine qua non* of a treaty, that France must return within her old frontiers. Castlereagh had insisted on that, and had facilitated its acceptance by the allies by coupling it indissolubly with the restoration by Britain of the French colonies to France.

that she displayed political gifts so decidedly that she should soon be fit to govern a kingdom.

Then, adverting to the Congress of Châtillon, he said that it had done him harm in every way, for the Powers had named as plenipotentiaries those who were personally hostile to him; yet he granted that England was now the most reasonable of the allies, and that Castlereagh seemed to be an estimable man. For the rest, if the Powers had aimed at peace, they would not have let the Bourbons enter France. He knew that Austria was not to blame in this, but she lacked the energy to oppose this step. Why should she want the Bourbons back again in France? A regency exercised by Marie Louise and the Senate would be far preferable for Austria, and he (Napoleon) was inclined to place the government in her hands. On Wessenberg showing signs of surprise and half expressed doubt, Napoleon interrupted him with the words: "No, no, even ambition gets used up, and I am nearing the age when one becomes restful."

When the envoy remarked that his genius would still find many resources, he uttered this remarkable confession: "You see what effect genius has; two years ago the world obeyed me, and to-day it is against me." He then closed the interview by repeating that Austria had no cause for driving him to desperation, and compelling him to become a freebooter. They should, therefore, come to an understanding; he would leave her a free hand in Germany and Italy, while she must show regard for the interests of France. "Farewell," were his last words, "your personal mischance will be a stroke of luck for me if it furnishes the opportunity of enlightening your Court as to my feel-

ings and bringing us nearer together. Your Kaiser cannot wish me to conclude a peace whose terms I cannot fulfil."

Napoleon then mounted his horse, and Wessenberg followed him in a carriage to Doulevant. There in the evening Bertrand invited the diplomatist to supper, and afterwards, opening the door of Napoleon's private room, showed him the Emperor lying on a bare mattress sunk in a profound slumber. It was the last night of untroubled rest for many a week. News came speedily to hand that the allies, far from retreating on Basle and Strasburg, were heading straight for Paris; and then began Napoleon's breathless race westwards to save his capital, a mighty effort which ended for him with brilliant failure, and for Marmont with inglorious betrayal.

As for the Emperor Francis, he and Metternich had hastily retired toward Dijon as soon as Napoleon's threatening movement was known, thereby unwittingly frustrating the very aim which his son-in-law had in view, namely, of intimidating the Austrian leaders by his rapid strokes at their communications, and then of seeking to detach them from the coalition by the diplomatic overtures just described.

Herein lies the value of the evidence which Wessenberg's papers have supplied. They show that the eastward movement of Napoleon was no despairing rush, like that of Bourbaki in the early days of 1871, but that it was based on diplomatic no less than on military grounds. Had the Czar and his *entourage* displayed a less trenchant energy at this crisis, or had Francis and Metternich not made so timely a retreat, there is no knowing whether the issue of events might

not, even then, have been the break up of the coalition and the triumph of Napoleon.

As it was, the very qualities on which Napoleon relied to sever the allies, viz., the soaring ambition of Alexander and the prudent reserve of Francis, conspired on this single occasion to bring the chief masses of the allies to the gates of an almost undefended capital, while their diplomatists and men of moderation retreated beyond the reach of Napoleon's tempting offers. Whether these last would have been accepted it is idle to speculate. What I have sought to prove is that Napoleon's dependence on the Kaiser's family feeling and his desire for compromise played no small share in determining his daring move against the rear of the allied grand army in March, 1814, as it also may have entered into the considerations that prompted him to stand his ground before Leipzig and risk the issue of a third day's battle.

Herr Fournier in his very valuable work on the Congress of Châtillon, has brought forward important proofs as to the vacillations of Austrian policy in the spring of 1814. In his copious appendices he includes the correspondence of Metternich with Hudelist and with Stadion; that of the Austrian headquarters; of Hardenberg with Frederick William; as well as Hardenberg's brief but very piquant private diary, in which the statesman dubs his sovereign "Cassandra!" Hanoverian and British aims are set forth in the despatches of Count Münster to the Prince Regent; and "Floret's Journal" throws some light on the inner workings of the Congress itself. Much of this correspondence is of the highest importance; such as, for instance, Hardenberg's entry on February 14th: "Austria, annoyed,

threatens to separate from us. I do all in my power to conciliate"; also the letter of Kaiser Franz to Schwarzenberg, dated Troyes, February 16th: "The present state of affairs demands more than ever that military operations should be undertaken with the utmost possible prudence, and that a pitched battle should be avoided." How the course of events in that singular campaign is explained by these few lines! And if we turn to Herr Fournier's narrative we find many a key to unlock the riddle of history. If we inquire why Kaiser Franz, after March 20th, suddenly cooled toward Napoleon, and why the animosity of the other allies toward him became irreconcilable, the reason is to be found in the capture of a letter written at Napoleon's dictation, by Maret to Caulaincourt on March 19th:

"L'Empereur désire que vous restiez dans le vague sur tout ce qui serait relatif à la livraison des places d'Anvers, Mayence, et Alexandrie, si vous étiez obligé à consentir à ces cessions, étant dans l'intention, même quand elle (*sic*) aurait ratifié le traité de prendre conseil de la situation militaire des choses.

"Attendez le dernier moment."

Efforts have been made by M. Houssaye and others to impugn the authenticity of this letter. But no doubt as to its authenticity was felt by the allies, and Dr. Fournier (p. 232, note) disposes of the doubts which French historians have raised on this topic. I may also remark that the tone of the letter is very similar to the instructions which Napoleon caused to be written for Caulaincourt's guidance on January 4th of that year. The plenipotentiary was bidden to temporize and play with the allies by every means possible in his

power until affairs took a more favourable turn. Besides, we question whether the above letter, if a forgery, would have contained the grammatical solecism, "elle," which implies "Sa Majesté" at the beginning of the letter, instead of the word "Empereur," which actually occurs. Diplomatists, if they want to forge a letter, do not insert grammatical blunders.

The interception of this letter sealed Napoleon's doom. Thenceforth the allies felt convinced that a peace with him would be broken at the first favourable opportunity. Metternich's friendly notes to Caulaincourt ceased at once; and Napoleon's proposal of a Regency of Marie Louise, with himself somewhere in the background, was seen to be merely a diplomatic device for weakening Austria's action, while he acquired the means for new efforts against the coalition. What wonder that the allies decided never to treat with him again—a determination which found renewed expression in their act of outlawry when he escaped from Elba in the following year! Napoleon once said to Gourgaud at St. Helena, "Voyez-vous, les malheurs suivent à la file, et, quand on est dans le malheur, tout tourne mal." This was à propos of the battle of Vittoria and the armistice of 1813, but it is equally applicable to the crisis of 1814.

One could wish that the piquant and fairly trustworthy revelations given to the world by Gourgaud showed us a real perception on Napoleon's part of the perversity of his own conduct on those two supreme occasions. Far from that, they reveal to us a man whose judgement, formerly so clear and far-seeing, had become blurred by egotism. He admits that the armistice of 1813 was a mistake, and that he should have

begun that year by sending back Ferdinand to Spain, an action which would have released "180,000 good soldiers" for service in Germany.[1]

But there is little or no realization of his folly in not coming to terms with Austria and preventing her accession to the ranks of the allies. In one of his outbursts concerning the Hapsburgs he remarks to Gourgaud, "Ah! ces gens-là ne sont conduits que par la peur."[2] At other times his judgement is more favourable; that Francis was at bottom a good man, and a brave man, and would have treated him better than the English. At the end of a few years Francis and he would have come to an understanding, and he (Napoleon) would have been placed over some provinces.[3] He even states that in 1815, if Murat had not foolishly attacked the Austrians, their emperor would have come to terms with France.[4]

Putting these later confessions side by side with Napoleon's own actions in 1813 and 1814, we can see how deep-rooted was his conviction that a deft mingling of cajolery and intimidation was certain to bring Austria to his feet; and, as we have now proved, this was one of the chief influences that determined his fall.

If we turn to the judgements of Austrian statesmen and historians on Napoleon's career, we are struck at once with the contrast which they present to those of the North Germans. In place of the hatred that pulsates through the writings of the latter—a very natural result of the unspeakable humiliations which he in-

[1] Gourgaud, "Journal de Ste.-Hélène," vol. ii., pp. 71, 265.
[2] *Ibid.*, vol. i., p. 415. [3] *Ibid.*, vol. i., pp. 343, 505.
[4] *Ibid.*, vol. i., p. 498.

flicted on their land after Jena—we observe a more measured and kindly tone towards the man, who, if he conquered Austria in four mighty wars, never trampled her in the dust, and who proved a good husband to Marie Louise. The Viennese Archives, which we have now passed in review, furnish us with another reason for this kindlier feeling shown by the men of letters on the Danube. They prove that Napoleon's action towards Austria in 1813-14 was the outcome, not of hatred, but of a fatal conviction that she could be bent, and must be bent, to obey his will, as she had done four years previously.

XI

THE PRUSSIAN CO-OPERATION AT WATERLOO[1]

THE German Emperor, presiding at a banquet held at Hanover on December 19th, 1903, to commemorate the formation of the King's German Legion a century before, uttered these words: "With hearty thanks I raise my glass in contemplation of the past, to the health of the German Legion, in memory of the incomparable deeds which, in conjunction with Blücher and the Prussians, rescued the English army from destruction at Waterloo." No sensible man would be disposed to take these words very seriously. The whole speech was obviously designed to strengthen in Hanover that wider Imperial feeling which has so largely replaced the narrow Guelf "particularism" of former days; and the enthusiastic cheers that greeted the Kaiser as he left the hall showed that the Hanoverians did not resent the somewhat unfortunate reference to Waterloo. Doubtless, in the enthusiasm of the moment all who were present, perhaps even including the august speaker himself, forgot that the 5,800 men of the German Legion were serving their sovereign, our George III., *in Wellington's army*, and were there-

[1] Reprinted from "The Monthly Review," of March, 1904.

fore among those who were "rescued from destruction" by the Prussians. The same remark applies, of course, to the 11,000 Hanoverian troops, mostly Landwehr, who formed part of Wellington's motley array.

A phrase that may have been due to the inspiration of the moment should neither be judged pedantically, nor should it arouse any ill-feeling on this side of the German Ocean. Seeing, however, that it expressed a conviction that is widely prevalent in Germany and that finds expression in the well-known work on Napoleonic strategy by a former member of the General Staff, Count Yorck von Wartenburg, it seems desirable to clear up some of the popular misunderstandings which have unfortunately arisen between Britons and Germans on this topic. To do so fully would, of course, necessitate an examination of the whole campaign. This being out of the question here, we must limit ourselves to essentials. These comprise: (1) the understanding—if there was one—between Blücher and Wellington as to the general plan of campaign; (2) the (conditional) promise of Wellington to come to Blücher's assistance at Ligny on June 16th; (3) Blücher's promise to help Wellington at the Waterloo position on June 18th; (4) the effectiveness of the Prussian aid there given. Obviously, the first three questions are preliminary to the last, but they are essential to a due understanding of it, and must therefore be briefly considered.

The position of the allies in front of Napoleon after his return from Elba was as follows. By the beginning of June, 1815, Blücher had assembled an army of 120,000 Prussians in the Belgic Netherlands between Charleroi, Namur and Liège; while Wellington's

British, German, and Dutch-Belgian forces, together amounting to 94,000 men, were cantoned in the neighbourhood of Brussels, Nivelles, Ath and Mons. Both commanders were anxious to invade France as soon as possible in order to surprise Napoleon in the midst of his preparations and to support the royalist efforts that were being put forth in the South and West. In his despatches of April 10th-12th Wellington urged the desirability of beginning, if possible, on May 1st. The weakness of the French royalists and the delay in the approach of the Austrian and Russian armies destined for the invasion of Alsace-Lorraine disarranged this plan; but there is nothing to show that Blücher and Wellington devised any scheme of *defensive* warfare.

True, they had an interview at Tirlemont on May 3rd, at which the Prussian commander gave the Duke "the most satisfactory assurances of support" in case Napoleon should invade Belgium; but that was considered to be a highly improbable event. They obviously trusted to the decision of the Czar that offensive movements should begin on all sides on June 1st. Wellington's voluminous correspondence contains scarcely a single reference to defensive operations. In his important letter of May 8th to Lord Stewart, the Duke says: "I say nothing about our defensive operations because I am inclined to believe we are so well united and so strong that the enemy cannot do us much mischief." He then discusses the best plans for the joint invasion of France, and sums up his ideas in the phrase, "Let us begin when we shall have 450,000 men," *i.e.*, on the front stretching from Mons to Langres.

In passing, we may commend this letter to the notice

of German writers, who, while admitting, like Gneisenau's biographer, Delbrück, that the Duke was unequalled in defensive warfare, nevertheless assert that he limited his views during the Waterloo campaign to the defence of "positions" after the style of strategists of the old school.[1] It is, however, clear from the letter just referred to, and from others like it, that the Duke saw the essentials to a successful invasion of France, but gave far too little thought to the defence of positions. In point of fact, Blücher and he were guilty of the capital error of under-rating the enemy. Even on the morning of June 15th, when the French were beginning to drive the Prussian outposts from the River Sambre, Wellington dictated a long despatch "to the Emperor of" [Russia], as to the best routes to be adopted in the forthcoming invasion of France, stating that his (Wellington's) army would have to lay siege to Maubeuge. Owing to unfortunate accidents, Wellington did not receive definite news as to the attack on the 1st Prussian corps (Ziethen's) until 6 p.m., a delay that led to most untoward results.[2]

Everything, then, tends to show that the allies had agreed on no plan of combined action in case they were attacked; and this is the conclusion of that able military writer, Mr. J. C. Ropes, as well as of the latest and most careful of German historians of the campaign, Professor von Pflugk-Harttung. Some Continental historians have stated that there was such a plan; but they have

[1] "Leben des Feldmarschalls von Gneisenau," von Hans Delbrück (Berlin, 1880), iv. pp. 408-413.

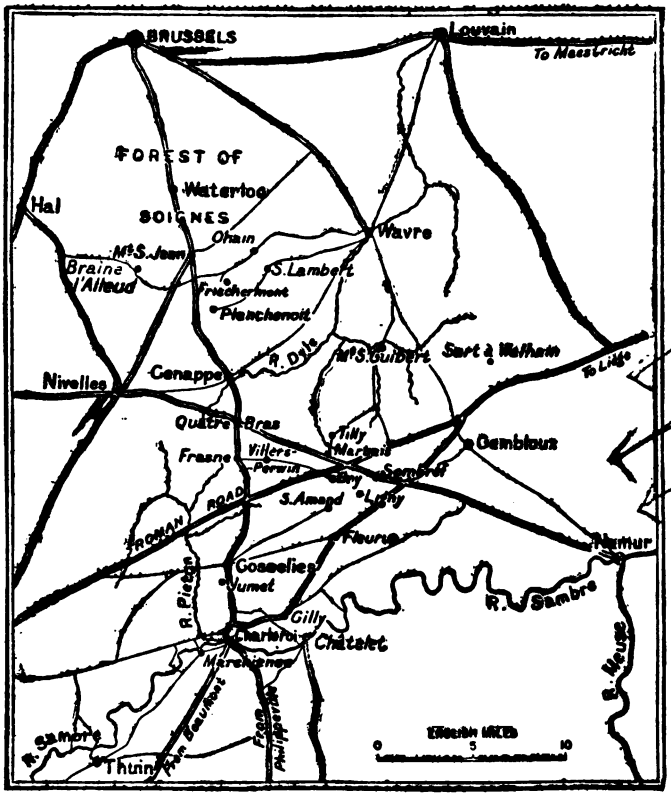
[2] "Vorgeschichte der Schlacht bei Belle-Alliance," von J. von Pflugk-Harttung (Berlin, 1903), pp. 50-52. Ropes, "Waterloo Campaign," pp. 75-77.

brought forward no proof; and the only *contemporary* assertion that favours any such conclusion is the following, from General von Müffling's "Passages from My Life": "The junction of the English and Prussian armies for a defensive battle . . . was so distinctly prescribed by circumstances and by the locality that no doubt whatever could be raised on the point." This vague statement, written *after* the event, is at variance with the known facts. Müffling, then Prussia's military representative at the British headquarters, was with Wellington on the evening of June 15th at Brussels just before the Duchess of Richmond's ball; but at that time the British troops were being directed *to Nivelles*, not to Quatre Bras, where they would be in touch with Blücher. The Prussians were then hurriedly concentrating at Sombref, near Ligny; but Blücher's orders, or rather those of Gneisenau, his Chief of Staff, were so far inexact that Bülow's corps, 32,000 strong, was still at Liège, and took no part in the great battle on the morrow.[1] The massing of Wellington's forces was equally unsatisfactory, mainly because he believed, up to a late hour of June 15th, that the main advance of the French would be by way of Mons or Nivelles, on the side of Blücher.

In truth, no fixed plan can be made for defensive operations against an enterprising enemy who has the choice of three lines of advance. In such a case great commanders do not pin themselves to a hard and fast plan; they closely watch every development and act accordingly. It is inexact to say that Wellington and

[1] Reiche, "Memoiren," ii. p. 199; von Pflugk-Harttung, *op. cit.* pp. 252-267.

Blücher were surprised by Napoleon's attack. They thought it improbable, but were determined to keep in



PLAN OF THE WATERLOO CAMPAIGN

touch as closely as possible on or near the line of advance actually chosen by him. Before leaving this topic we may note that the delay in Wellington's concentration was largely due to the insufficient news sent by

General Ziethen, commanding the 1st Prussian corps on the River Sambre, between Charleroi and Thuin. After sending a despatch to Müffling at the British headquarters early on June 15th to the effect that he was being attacked at the latter place, he forwarded no more news for twelve hours. The Duke, therefore, could not know how serious was the onset on that line. Thus, as generally happens in a complex situation, there were executive failings both on the Prussian and on the British side, the upshot being that Blücher had no help from Bülow's corps at Ligny, while the concentration of Wellington's forces was so tardy as to endanger the position of Quatre-Bras and to leave the Prussians without the succour on which they counted from their allies.

This brings us to the second question, whether Wellington offered help to Blücher at Ligny, and, if so, whether the offer was absolute or conditional. The only written contemporary evidence on this topic is contained in the letter sent by the Duke to Blücher from Quatre Bras at 10.30 a.m. on the 16th. First published by General von Ollech in 1876, it has since been quoted by Messrs. Ropes, Horsburgh, Sir Herbert Maxwell, and other English writers; we need, therefore, cite only the last two sentences: "I do not see much of the enemy in front of us, and I await news of your Highness and the arrival of troops in order to determine my operations for the day. Nothing has appeared on the side of Binche, or on our right."[1]

The first part of the letter gave a general description of the positions of Wellington's divisions on the march

[1] Ollech, "Der Feldzug von 1815," p. 125.

for Quatre Bras; and it is undeniable that in most cases they were not so far advanced as the Duke believed them to be. It is clear, however, that he had been misled by the "Memorandum" of De Lancey, his Chief of Staff, and that that experienced officer was at fault owing to the lack of training of his subordinates. Wellington knew his Staff to be new to the work, witness his letter of May 8th: "I have got an infamous army, very weak and ill equipped, and a very inexperienced Staff." Though matters had improved since then, he was perhaps too sanguine in counting on the accuracy of the news collected by his Staff as to the hurried movements then going on. In any case, however, his written promise of help was conditional on the arrival of his divisions; and only a hasty and illogical reading could interpret it as an absolute pledge.

But there is also the question of what went on at an interview which Wellington had with the Prussian leaders at Bry, a hamlet near Ligny, shortly before the fighting began. As the conversation went on in French, Blücher held aloof; but his executive chiefs, Generals Gneisenau and Grolmann, took part in it, as also Generals Müffling and Dörnberg, who accompanied Wellington. The only accounts extant are by the two last. They vary considerably. Müffling states that he refrained from pointing out to Gneisenau the inaccuracy of the Duke's statement as to the positions of his forces; also that when Gneisenau pressed Wellington to lead a part of his army to help the Prussians, he (Müffling) privately advised him not to urge a request that would contravene the British commander's well-known principle of keeping his army undivided and well in hand. According to Müffling, Wellington's last words were,

"Well! I will come, provided that I myself am not attacked."

In Dörnberg's version, Gneisenau appears as approving the Duke's plan of driving the French from before Quatre Bras back down the Charleroi road; but the Prussian Chief of Staff is then represented as suggesting that it would be even better if Wellington would hold the French in check on that side and march with the rest of his army to help the Prussians at Ligny. To this the Duke is said to have replied: "The reasoning is correct. I will see what is in front of me [at Quatre Bras] and how much of my army has arrived, and act accordingly."[1] Thus Dörnberg makes Wellington agree to the plan of dividing his army—the very plan to which Müffling states that he was firmly opposed. Evidently on the question of the suggested help to be given to the Prussians, the evidence of these two officers is worthless. We may add that the Prussian official report of the battle of Ligny is equally unsatisfactory on this point. It runs thus; ". . . Nevertheless, Field-Marshal Blücher resolved to give battle, Lord Wellington having already put in motion to support him a strong division of his army, as well as his whole reserve stationed in the environs of Brussels, and the fourth corps of the Prussian army [Bülow's] being also on the point of arriving." These statements are incorrect. The Duke's forces were all marching for Quatre Bras, a movement far different from that of Bülow towards Ligny, with which it is here equated.

Apart from a later remark of Wellington to Hardinge and Stanhope that, during the conversation at Bry, he

[1] Ollech, *op. cit.*, pp. 126-127.

warned the Prussian chiefs of their dangerously exposed position on the slope behind Ligny, this is all that we know about this very important conference. And I submit that the evidence disproves the assertions made by several German writers—Ollech and Pflugk-Harttung are honourable exceptions—that the Duke encouraged the Prussians to fight in a dangerous position by offering them promises of help which he knew he could not make good.

Besides, if we place the matter on general grounds, is it in the least degree likely that Wellington would endanger his good relations with the Prussians at the beginning of a great campaign by a display of shiftiness? To put it on the lowest ground, that of self-interest, he needed their co-operation far more than they needed his. The Prussian army was firm and homogeneous; while in that of the Duke four different languages were spoken, and the fidelity of the Belgians and Nassauers was open to question. Finally, if there be any doubt left on this topic, the reader may refer to the convincing arguments advanced by that able American writer, Mr. Ropes—a severe critic of Wellington on many points—showing that Blücher and Gneisenau had made all their dispositions to offer battle at Ligny on June 16th, whether they had help from Wellington or not.[2]

I have examined the evidence on this point somewhat closely, firstly, because Gneisenau's resentment at what he chose to consider Wellington's breach of faith influenced the Prussian movements unfavourably on the morning of Waterloo, but also because his bio-

[1] Stanhope, "Conversations with Wellington," p. 109.
[2] Ropes, "The Waterloo Campaign," chap. x.

graphers and most subsequent German historians have approached the events of that great day with minds distinctly biassed against Wellington, owing to his supposed double-dealing on the morning of June 16th.

We now turn to the question of the Prussian co-operation on the 18th. It is, however, only fair to refer to the heroism which Gneisenau displayed at the close of the Battle of Ligny. Amidst the turmoil of defeat, when Blücher's severe fall caused the weight of responsibility to rest on his shoulders, he decided to give up his former base of supplies on the Namur-Liège road, and to direct the retreat northwards towards Wavre. The inference is inevitable that he did so in order to keep touch with Wellington for the defence of Brussels. Is it too much to assume that his distrust of Wellington was not an over-mastering motive?

As to the details of co-operation, the credit must be awarded to Blücher. That indomitable old man quickly recovered from his grievous shock, and at a conference held on the evening of June 17th declared strongly in favour of a flank march to join Wellington. Gneisenau was now in favour of caution; and according to Hardinge, who was present, he opposed the flank march as an imprudent step.[1] Certainly it was a daring conception; it bespoke that staunchness of mind which led Scharnhorst some years before to describe Blücher as the only Prussian general who had not a particle of fear of Napoleon. Still, there was nothing Quixotic in the proposal. Bülow's powerful corps was then at hand, and its arrival more than repaired the losses sustained at Ligny. The reserve ammunition had also escaped

[1] Stanhope, "Conversations with Wellington," p. 110 (written in 1837).

Grouchy's horsemen; and—a detail that is generally forgotten in the discussion of this question—the Prussians then believed Grouchy to have been sent in pursuit of them with only 15,000 men.[1] That would have left Wellington face to face with an even greater force than was then actually mustering on the slope of La Belle Alliance. Thus, all the facts, as then known at Blücher's headquarters at Wavre, called for a secret but determined march against Napoleon's flank on the morrow.

As for Wellington, he too certainly expected help from the Prussians. At 9 a.m. on that day he had sent word to Blücher that he would accept battle from Napoleon at the position in front of Waterloo if a Prussian *corps d'armée* came to his aid. Up to nightfall he had no reply; and it is significant that his despatch of the evening of June 17th to Colville at Hal contains the phrase: "The army will probably continue in its position in front of Waterloo to-morrow." That is to say, if the Prussians disappointed him, he was ready to beat a hasty retreat on Brussels and the citadel of Antwerp; but if they sent him a corps he was ready to face the risks of a battle. It was not until close on 3 a.m. of the 18th that a letter from Blücher to Müffling was communicated to the Duke and put an end to his uncertainty. It was penned shortly before midnight and ran as follows:

"HEADQUARTERS, WAVRE, *June 17th*, 1815.

"I hereby inform you that, in consequence of the communication made to me to the effect that the Duke of Wellington will to-morrow accept battle in the posi-

[1] Ollech, p. 169. Grouchy really had 33,319 men.

tion from Braine l'Alleud to La Haye, my troops will be put in motion in the following way: Bülow's corps will start very early at dawn from Dion-le-Mont and advance through Wavre by way of St. Lambert, in order to attack the enemy's right wing. The second corps will immediately follow the fourth [Bülow's] corps; and the first and third corps hold themselves ready likewise to follow thither. The exhaustion of the troops, which in part have not arrived (namely, the tail of the fourth corps) makes it impossible to advance earlier. In return, I beg you to inform me betimes when and how the Duke is attacked, so that I may be able to take measures accordingly."[1]

At midnight Blücher sent orders in the same sense to his four corps commanders. We know, however, that about 7 to 8 a.m. of the 18th, though no news came in as to Grouchy's approach, Gneisenau and Grolmann wished to hold back the first, second, and third corps until noon, ostensibly in order to see whether Grouchy would advance in unexpected force. But the real reason of Gneisenau's caution is to be seen in a postscript which he added to a despatch dictated by Blücher for Müffling at 9.30 a.m. The despatch itself renewed the promise of help to Wellington, and stated that Blücher would come in person. The postscript informed Müffling that Gneisenau agreed with the terms of the despatch, but begged him to

"find out accurately whether the Duke has the fixed intention to fight in his present position, or whether possibly nothing but 'demonstrations' are intended, as these can only be in the highest degree compromising to our army."[2]

[1] Ollech, p. 187.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 189.

Thus, while Blücher was doing his utmost to induce Wellington to withstand Napoleon's onset by sending a definite promise of speedy help with at least two army corps, Gneisenau and Grolmann took upon themselves to hold back the corps named above, and to allow the suspicion to take root at their headquarters that the advance towards Wellington might prove to be a piece of chivalrous folly. It is easy to see that, with this feeling in the air, the march even of Bülow's corps could not at first be very expeditious. It was delayed by positive difficulties, such as the march over the narrow bridge at Wavre, the outbreak of a fire there, as well as by the fatigue of the soldiers themselves; but it has been pointed out that time might have been saved if Bülow had skirted the town instead of passing through it. Between 10 and 11 a.m. it was resolved at headquarters, probably through Blücher's direct intervention, that the second corps, that of Pirch I., should begin to follow Bülow; also that the first corps, that of Ziethen, should set out at noon by a road more to the north, so as to come into touch with Wellington's left wing. The distance to be covered by the three Prussian corps was about ten English miles, or twelve for that of Bülow, which started from the east of Wavre. The roads were narrow, hilly, and deep in mud from the heavy downpour of rain. Yet, allowing for these difficulties, Wellington might confidently expect the approach of the Prussians by midday. The terms of Blücher's letter fully warranted that belief. Clausewitz, a severe critic of Wellington, allows that six to eight hours was the natural time for the march; but he censures the arrangements of the Prussian Staff whereby Pirch's and Ziethen's corps had to cross each other's

path. He points out that the serious delay which this involved might have been avoided if Ziethen had followed Bülow, while Pirch marched straight towards Smohain on Wellington's left.[1] The reason for these tortuous arrangements has, I believe, never been revealed.

What is quite clear is that Wellington made all his dispositions with a view to the early arrival of the Prussians. This explains his comparative neglect of his left wing. Defended by the steep slope in front and the outlying hamlets of Papelotte, La Haye, and Smohain, it could shift for itself for an hour or two; the Duke's chief care was bestowed on his more accessible right wing. He even removed the sappers, who were strengthening La Haye Sainte, to Hougomont, with the view of making that *château* a formidable bulwark on his right. The evidence of British officers all tells the same tale. Sir Augustus Fraser says in his Letters: "We expected the help of the Prussians early in the day." Colonel Freemantle, aide-de-camp to Wellington, is even more explicit:

"Many officers were sent in the morning in search of the [Prussian] army. Towards six o'clock Sir Horace Seymour came and reported to the Duke of Wellington that he had seen the Prussian column."

A sentence in Sir Horace Seymour's letter on the same

[1] Clausewitz, "Der Feldzug von 1815," p. 110. [We may go further and declare that these arrangements were such as inevitably to lead to the maximum of delay. The corps which was farthest from Wellington was chosen to lead the march, though its troops were dead tired; and the halt caused by the crossing of the next two corps can be explained only on the ground that the Prussian Staff *wished* to delay the operation.]

topic shows the grounds of Wellington's impatience at the delay of the Prussians:

"I was desired by the Duke of Wellington to tell General Bülow that the Duke wished him immediately to send him Prussian infantry to fill up the loss that had taken place in his lines." [1]

Now, Blücher had promised that Bülow should start at dawn to march against Napoleon's right flank. Wellington evidently believed that Bülow's objective would be the ground just to the south of Smohain, in front of his (Wellington's) left wing. As a matter of fact, Bülow was assigned a task of a far more drastic and difficult kind, namely, to attack Planchenoit, a village *to the rear* of the French right wing. This was sound strategy, but it had the grave tactical disadvantage of involving the attack of a naturally strong position, which, as the event proved, the French held with no difficulty for nearly five hours against the superior numbers brought up first by Bülow and thereafter by Pirch I.

Wellington, meanwhile, benefited only indirectly from this attack of the two Prussian corps which started first; for, as we have seen, the duty of supporting the British forces devolved on Ziethen's corps, which was the last to set out. Not only so, but this corps was by far the weakest of the Prussian army. It alone had borne the French onset on the Sambre, and was sharply handled in the running fight that followed. At Ligny

[1] "Waterloo Letters," pp. 25-27, 170. These extracts refute Müffling's assertion that the Duke said he did not expect the Prussians till 2 or 3 o'clock. (Müffling, "Sketch of the Battle of Waterloo." English edit., p. 11, 1833.)

it suffered frightfully. Reiche, the Chief of Staff of that corps, gives its losses on those two days as 225 officers and 12,486 non-commissioned officers and men, or two-fifths of its whole strength. Sixteen cannon were also lost. Deducting this from his total for the 14th, namely, 30,831 combatants, we have 18,120 as the largest possible number of effectives for the 16th.[1] This, we repeat, was the force told off for the direct support of Wellington. Owing to the delays that happened to the two first corps, Ziethen's leading brigade did not start until 2 p.m.—a delay that might easily have led to fatal consequences.[2]

Now, can this be considered a satisfactory execution of the promise made by Blücher in his midnight despatch? Wellington was believed to be very seriously outnumbered—more so than he actually was; considering the notorious unsteadiness of a large part of his army, the Prussian Staff certainly dallied with Fortune in assuming that he could hold his own till the afternoon. At any rate, it was very questionable conduct to lead the Duke to expect help by midday and to withhold the arrival of any direct succour until the evening *without warning him of that postponement.* If the Prussian despatches to Wellington's headquarters are compared with the details of their execution, it will be seen that Gneisenau's conduct is open to the same criticism which his biographers have so vehemently brought against Wellington for the events of the 16th. It is true, of course, that the Duke's failure to send any troops to Ligny has an ugly look until we remember

[1] Reiche, "Memoiren," ii. pp. 195-196
[2] Ollech, p. 193.

the uncertainty that hung over the enemy's movements on the 15th and 16th. It is also true that the flank march of the Prussians from Wavre was, for their septuagenarian leader and for the troops themselves, an exhibition of persistence that is unsurpassed in the history of war. But, none the less, if we look at the promise held out to Wellington, the performance, as far as concerned the Prussian Staff, must be pronounced slow and half-hearted.

Finally, we must point out that the allied armies were in very different positions on the 16th and the 18th. At the earlier date their concentrations were incomplete; on the 18th the allies were completely massed, excepting the force at Hal. They had also fathomed the aims of Napoleon, the result being that the paralyzing uncertainties of the first two days of the campaign now gave place to that assurance which enabled blows to be struck boldly. The only element of uncertainty for the Prussians on the 18th was as to the strength and aims of Grouchy's force; and the well-known preference of Napoleon for acting with great masses forbade the assumption that he had detached a large force from his main command. All the news to hand about Grouchy's column served to show that it was neither strong nor well led. Thielmann's corps, some 23,000 strong, holding the fairly good position in front of Wavre, was a reasonable defence against any moves that Grouchy might attempt against the other three corps during their flank march. It would be hypercritical, however, to blame Bülow, Pirch, and Ziethen for making a halt when they heard Grouchy's cannon south of Wavre. Ziethen especially deserves credit for deciding, on his own responsibility, to resume

his advance, leaving only a part of his fourth brigade to act as a rearguard.[1]

We now come to the final question of the effectiveness of Prussian help in the battle. Obviously this divides itself into two parts, the indirect and the direct assistance. The indirect help was that which the pressure of Bülow's and Pirch's corps exerted, far away from the British left, on Napoleon's right wing and reserves, and on his conduct of the fight. The direct help was that given by Ziethen's corps on Wellington's left at the close of the battle. Obviously it is impossible to assess the former at all precisely; the latter may be gauged with some approach to definiteness.

Bülow's corps was not well enough together to advance from the wood of Frischermont against the French right wing until 4.30 p.m. It is true that Napoleon knew of the advance of that corps a little before 2 p.m., but he paid little heed to the news. General Foy's journal, first published in 1900, adds to the proofs already to hand that Napoleon, from the early morning and onwards, turned a deaf ear to the rumours of the advance of the Prussians, first, because he believed their army to be too badly shaken to attempt any serious attack for two days longer; and secondly, because he trusted in Grouchy's ability to take them *en flagrant délit* if they braved the perils of a flank march with that marshal hanging on their rear.[2]

Such was Napoleon's fixed belief. It did not in the least correspond with the facts such as we have seen them to be; and his misconception, persevered in to

[1] Reiche, "Memoiren," ii. pp. 21-22.

[2] "Vie Militaire du Général Foy." Edited by M. Girod de l'Ain (Paris, 1900).

the end, was the chief cause of his utter overthrow. But, for the present, that belief led him to trust the defence of his right to two divisions of Lobau's corps, 7,800 strong, and two brigades of cavalry.[1] Such was the tenacity of these troops and of their leader that they held up against Bülow's two leading divisions for an hour and a half. But as the rest of Bülow's men joined in the fight, the French right wing (now swung round at right angles to their front) was gradually driven back, and about six o'clock lost part of the village of Planchenoit. At once Napoleon sent in his Young Guard, a trifle over 4,000 strong, and these choice troops regained that all-important post, while Lobau prolonged his line to the north to strengthen the French line to the south of the angle pointing towards Smohain. The Emperor now thought all danger past on that side, for he was still ignorant that Pirch's corps was marching, under cover of the Frischermont Wood, to Bülow's aid. He therefore turned his attention once more to Wellington; and there followed the efforts which wrested La Haye Sainte from the King's German Legion at 6.30 (M. Houssaye has proved that it cannot have fallen at an earlier time), and culminated in the attack of five (or perhaps six) battalions of the Imperial Guard on Wellington's right centre.

Now, what did the indirect aid afforded by Bülow's flank attack amount to? It diverted from the conflict with Wellington Lobau's small but excellent corps, the Young Guard, and two brigades of cavalry. According

[1] Ollech (usually very correct in details) on p. 241 wrongly gives Lobau's corps as 10,000 strong, but one of his divisions, that of Teste, was put under Grouchy on the 17th for the pursuit of the Prussians, thus reducing it to 7,800.

to Janin, who commanded one of the divisions under Lobau, that corps was about to be launched against Wellington's right when Bülow's advance altered the aspect of the battle on that side.[1] It is clear that things would have gone hard with Wellington had Lobau and the Young Guard added their weight to the French infantry attack at the close of the great cavalry charges. As it was, the onset of Bachelu's division and half of Foy's division (in all about 7,000 men) was quickly repelled by the converging fire from Wellington's right centre. "C'était une grêle de mort," wrote Foy of this repulse, which Siborne and other historians have so little noticed.

This, then, was the value of Bülow's attack from Wellington's point of view. Between 4.30 and 6.30 it saved him the pressure of 14,000 excellent troops. But it did even more than this. Shortly before the final charge of the Old and Middle Guard against Wellington's right centre, the French had lost nearly the whole of the village of Planchenoit under the persistent vigour of the Prussian onsets. In order to retrieve matters on this side, Napoleon detached from his still formidable reserves two battalions of his Guard; and these veterans cleared the village for the second time. He also left two more of these choice battalions in reserve facing Planchenoit, and three others on the plateau near La Belle Alliance. Thus, the renewed attacks of Bülow and Pirch had the effect of withdrawing seven battalions of the Guard from the final onset on Wellington. Granting that the Iron Duke made the utmost of his unexpectedly strong position and that the rank and

[1] Janin, "La Campagne de Waterloo" (Paris, 1820), p. 34.

file met every onset with superhuman fortitude, it is difficult to see how they could have withstood the attack of twelve or thirteen battalions of the Imperial Guard.

Further, we must remember that the Duke always faced the fact that he might possibly be driven from the ridge of Mont St. Jean before the arrival of the Prussians. When questioned in later years as to his course of action in that case, he replied: "There was always the wood to retire into."[1] His despatch of June 19th also shows that he always counted on the Prussians either to clinch the triumph or to paralyse the French pursuit if Napoleon gained the day; and in the phrases at its close he pays a generous tribute to the Prussian flank attack: "The operation of General Bülow upon the enemy's flank was a most decisive one."

The accounts given by British officers in the "Waterloo Letters" contain few references to it. This is not surprising. They were wrapped up in the events passing immediately in front, and could scarcely see through the smoke-laden air the signs of fighting a mile and a half away at Planchenoit. In the same way the Prussian historians, Plotho and Damitz, following the narratives of their officers, dwelt almost exclusively on the Prussian side of the battle, and all but ignored the services of Wellington's troops. And thus among both peoples there have arisen impressions which have scarcely been dispelled by the fuller light of to-day. Only by a calculation such as has been attempted above can the effect of the indirect help afforded to

[1] Sir W. Fraser, "Hic et ubique," p. 83.

Wellington by Bülow and Pirch be assessed at something like its true value.

Much uncertainty has rested on the subject of the aid directly afforded to Wellington's left wing by the arrival of Ziethen's corps late in the day. Unquestionably there has been a tendency on the part of some German historians to overrate its importance by hazarding the assertion that the whole of that corps came up in time to take part in the battle. It should therefore be remembered that Ziethen's corps numbered at most only 18,120 effectives on the morning of the 18th; that after setting out as late as 2 p.m. from Wavre, it left behind part of one brigade to observe Grouchy's movements; and that its vanguard did not appear at Ohain, near Wellington's left, until after 6 p.m. The recently published "Reminiscences of a Staff-Officer" (Basil Jackson) show that the advance of their skirmishers at that time appeared to be intolerably slow. In fact, Jackson ventured to point out to a Prussian officer the urgent need of a speedier advance.[1] The evidence supplied by Sir Horace Seymour and Colonel Freemantle in the "Waterloo Letters" (pp. 20-22) shows that the Duke sent to ask for 3,000 Prussians to make good his losses on the left. But Ziethen declined to "make a detachment."

The slowness of Ziethen's advance has always caused perplexity alike to British officers and historians. The riddle is solved, however, by General von Reiche, Chief of Staff of that corps, in his Memoirs, the importance of which was pointed out to the present writer by the late Lord Acton. Reiche was with the leading brigade,

[1] "Notes and Reminiscences of a Staff-Officer." Edited by R. C. Seaton (Murray, 1903), pp. 54-55.

that of General Steinmetz, consisting of two regiments of the line and one of Landwehr, as it was about to pass the place where the roads to Frischermont and Smohain diverge, when an order came from Blücher, then with Bülow, ordering Ziethen to help in the attack on Planchenoit, "as things were beginning to go badly there." On Reiche pointing out the urgent need of reinforcing Wellington, Blücher's aide-de-camp cut him short with the remark that he would be held personally responsible if he disobeyed the present order. On the other hand, Müffling, who had ridden up from Wellington's headquarters, loudly asserted that the day would be lost unless the column moved on to help Wellington.

Reiche was in cruel perplexity, but finally ordered the head of the brigade, which had meanwhile moved forward, back to the fork in the roads. Most fortunately Ziethen rode up at that moment, and immediately decided to disobey the Staff order and move on to Wellington's assistance.[1] Reiche's narrative is so clear and circumstantial that I feel bound to accept this version of events. He had previously ridden forward to see how the battle was going; and on his return found that matters were worse than before. The Nassauers of Prince Bernard of Saxe Weimar had just been driven by the French from the hamlet of Smohain, but on the approach of Ziethen's vanguard the assailants speedily retreated, as also a little later from Papelotte and La Haye hamlets. The leading brigade was thereafter able to act as connecting-link between the other Prussian forces facing Lobau and Wellington's weak left wing—a matter of some importance,

[1] Reiche, "Memoiren," ii. p. 213. Ollech, p. 244.

as it enabled the final advance to be made in a solid, effective manner.[1]

Reiche also claims credit for having planted two of his leading batteries, each of eight field guns, on the high ground above Papelotte; and when the artillery officers declined to fire because they could scarcely distinguish friends from foes in the smoke, he took the whole responsibility for their firing at the French (Durutte's and Marcognet's divisions), still struggling hard in the angle between the allied armies. Reiche claims that the fire of his sixteen guns was decisive. This may be doubted. The conditions were unfavourable to effective fire; eight of the guns were only 8-pounders, and it is questionable whether they were worked for more than half an hour. Colonel Freemantle states that he ordered one of the batteries to cease fire as it was among the British lines, and, apparently, endangered our men in front.[2] It should also be noted that out of Ziethen's whole corps scarcely more than one brigade took an active part in the fighting, and great as its services were at that angle they cannot be said to have decided the fate of the day.

Yet that claim is made by Müffling and by the German historian Damitz, who in this matter have been somewhat incautiously followed by Mr. Ropes.[3] Müffling states that the French centre held firm even

[1] [Sir Hussey Vivian acknowledged this. See "Lord Vivian: a Memoir," p. 331. The slight part taken by Ziethen's corps in the fighting is shown by its losses of officers on the 18th. No officer was killed, and only eight were wounded. Compare this with the losses of the Fourth Corps (Bülow's) at Planchenoit, namely, 22 killed, and 126 wounded.]

[2] "Waterloo Letters," p. 22.

[3] Ropes, pp. 340-341.

after the repulse of the Imperial Guard further to their left, and that Ziethen's guns alone broke it up. On this point the French are the best judges; and their opinion has always been that the sight of the bearskins of the Old Guard streaming down the slope determined the retreat.

"Le cri 'La Garde recule' retentit comme le glas de la Grande Armee. Chacun sent que tout est fini. Les soldats de Donzelot et d'Allix aux prises sur les crêtes au-dessus de la Haye-Sainte . . . voient la Garde plier. Ils cèdent aussi le terrain conquis et redescendent au pied du côteau, entrainant dans leur retraite la division Marcognet. . . . Le mouvement de retraite gagne toute la ligne de bataille de la gauche à la droite. En même temps, les fantassins de Durutte[on the extreme French right] sont attaqués dans Papelotte et dans La Haye par les têtes de colonnes prussiennes débouchant du chemin d'Ohain. On crie 'Sauve qui peut! Nous sommes trahis.'"[1]

Such is the conclusion of M. Houssaye, after an examination of the evidence on the French side. The testimony of British officers, in the "Waterloo Letters," as also of Basil Jackson in his "Reminiscences," is all in the same direction. While, therefore, it is unwise to dogmatize as to the side on which the French retreat began, the evidence that it began with the repulse of the Old and Middle Guard is overwhelming.

Still more certain is it that the Prussians did not capture Planchenoit until some time after the break up of the French front. The resistance of the Old and Young Guard at that point was so fierce and prolonged

[1] Houssaye, "Waterloo," pp. 408-409. [See, too, the French official bulletin published on June 21st.]

that the heroic survivors, on being driven out by the weight of numbers, were cut up *by British cavalry*, probably by the brigades of Vivian, Vandeleur, and Grant.[1] These facts completely dispose of the assertions of German historians, even including Ollech, that Wellington's advance on La Belle Alliance was a matter of form, and contributed little or nothing to the rout of the French army.

The French have always attributed their final rout to the timely and spirited advance of Vivian's and Vandeleur's brigades of cavalry. Mounted on fresh horses, they were able to overthrow the wearied remains of the French cavalry; Vivian's men also cut down the artillerymen at their guns, so that "from this moment not another cannon shot was fired." Vivian also states that not until his brigade had cut down some Prussians in the twilight did he give up the pursuit to them.[2] As to the part played by the glorious 52nd Regiment (Colborne's) there is no need to speak; the recent "Life of John Colborne, Lord Seaton," places it beyond dispute. We may add, however, that at nightfall Basil Jackson found the regiment on the right of the road beyond La Belle Alliance, leaving the left free for the Prussian advance, "formed up in line, as quiet and orderly as if at the termination of a review." As it stood there a Prussian officer, while leading his column on for that strenuous pursuit, stepped up to the colour-bearer of the 52nd and pressed the flag to his breast.[3]

[1] "Waterloo Letters," pp. 131, 138, 140, 149-150, 175-177.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 150, 157.

[3] Basil Jackson, *op. cit.* p. 57. Leeke, "Supplement to the History of the 52nd Regiment," p. 63.

Müffling, too, though he exaggerates the importance of Ziethen's advance, admits that Bülow's capture of Planchenoit came too late to lead to the results that might have been attained on that side. After stating that part of Pirch's corps had come up to join in the final attack on the village, he continues: "The enemy was dislodged from Planchenoit; cannon and prisoners were taken, and the remainder got into the same confusion with the same mass, which, near La Maison du Roi, was just rolling along the high road. Had it been possible to take the village an hour sooner, the enemy could not have retreated on the high road to Genappe."[1] In that case Napoleon and the mass of his army would have been cut off and compelled to surrender; for General Petit, who was with the last two squares of the Old Guard that stood firm, states that they were outflanked both on the right and on the left by the allied advance from Mont St. Jean.[2] It is well known that had the Prussians caught the Emperor, Blücher and Gneisenau were determined to shoot him as an outlaw. The loss of that hoped-for act of vengeance was the penalty which the Prussian Staff paid for its delays on the morning of that eventful day.

Materials are now to hand that will enable German historians to form a final judgement on the events of this momentous campaign; and if we may judge from the first instalment of Professor von Pflugk-Harttung's

[1] "Der Feldzug von 1815," von C. von M[üffling]. English edit. (1816), pp. 36-37.

[2] [See the "Relation" of General Petit (who commanded the first regiment of *Grenadiers de la Garde*), published for the first time by Professor Moore-Smith in the "English Historical Review" for April, 1903.]

work, Germans will at last have an opportunity of learning the whole truth and nothing but the truth. While not altogether freeing Wellington from blame for the Prussian defeat at Ligny, he shows (p. 265) that Bülow's absence from the field of battle was far more blameworthy; and when he passes under review the details of the 18th, we may expect to see the popular German version greatly modified. The need of such a scholarly investigation is evident. Even after Ollech had done much to rectify the German version of Waterloo, a Prussian Staff-Officer, Count Yorck von Wartenburg, ventured to describe the close of the battle in the following terms:

"The stroke delivered by the [Imperial] Guards along the Brussels road to the left broke through the enemy's ranks as far as their last line; but here its strength was at an end, and they had to fall back. It was 8 o'clock. Already ruin stared the French right wing in the face. Simultaneously with the centre attack of the [Imperial] Guards, Reille and d'Erlon had also advanced; the latter had now taken Smohain and La Haye, when, about 7.30, a fresh Prussian corps [Ziethen's] appeared on the battlefield, threw itself at once upon d'Erlon's right wing and drove it back; Smohain, Papelotte and La Haye were regained. Taking advantage of this, Wellington, feeling himself relieved, ordered a general advance of his whole line."[1]

The same writer also repeated the charge of Welling-

[1] Count Yorck von Wartenburg, "Napoleon als Feldherr," Berlin, 1885-1886, 2 vols. (English edit. 1897), *ad fin.*

[It is surprising to find that Herr von Lettow-Vorbeck, in his recent history of this campaign, repeats all the old refuted calumnies against Wellington.]

ton's breach of faith at Ligny—a charge already refuted by Ollech—and in every way sought to disparage the achievements of the Duke's army. The Kaiser's speech at Hanover shows that military circles in Germany are still imbued with the spirit that pervades the quasi-official work of Count Yorck of Wartenburg. Is it not time that this one-sided view of the campaign of 1815 should cease? The Battle of Waterloo was nothing if it was not a combined effort on the part of the allies. The terms of Blücher's promise and the eager searching for the Prussian army by British staff-officers in the morning alike prove that Wellington expected direct help by noonday. Possibly he would not have faced the terrible risks of the day had he known that no direct help would arrive until the end of the battle. In any case, to assert that Blücher saved Wellington's army from destruction is as wide of the mark as to say that in a pugilistic encounter the right hand saved the left from a thrashing. Blücher's army, alike in numbers and cohesion, was fitted for striking the great blows. Wellington's motley following was by its very nature condemned to more defensive tactics. It is surely time, then, that our kith and kin on the Continent should recognize the marvellous skill of the Iron Duke in defending a position which had only one element of strength—that of being far stronger than it seemed from the ridge of La Belle Alliance—and the indomitable pluck which prompted him to deal telling blows at the end of a most exhausting struggle.

Two legends of Waterloo have already been dispelled. We Britons were long at fault in believing that the Prussians came up only at the finish and merely garnered the fruits of Wellington's toil. That travesty

of fact has vanished. Thanks also to the painstaking investigations of M. Houssaye, our neighbours across the Channel no longer believe that 70,000 Frenchmen for ten hours held at bay 80,000 Prussians and the 70,000 troops of Wellington, until treason caused an unaccountable stampede. It seems, however, that the German legend of Waterloo still awaits the solvent of historical research.

XII

THE DETENTION OF NAPOLEON BY GREAT BRITAIN[1]

THE attention of the world has been so much directed of late to the last years of Napoleon's life that no apology is needed for setting forth some new details of his captivity that are drawn from the British Record Office. Alone, perhaps, of all the important archives of Europe, those of Great Britain have not as yet yielded up all their secrets for the years 1815-1821 on this subject. It is true that Captain Maitland's "Narrative" supplied many important facts; that Forsyth, in his very thorough and conscientious edition of the Lowe papers, threw a flood of light on a subject where misrepresentation and slander had previously held unchallenged sway; while Mr. Allardyce's "Memoirs of Lord Keith" also furnished some interesting details. But apart from these works few, if any, have appeared that are based on a study of our official papers. It is the purpose of this article to fill in some of the gaps from the materials which the writer has gained by a study of the Foreign Office, Admiralty, and Colonial Office archives of this period.

[1] Reprinted from "The Owens College Historical Essays" (Longmans and Co., 1902).

The question that meets us on the threshold of our inquiry is this; Was Napoleon justified in representing himself as coming to us as a guest, freely and without any obvious need? Or was his escape to America hopeless; and did he adopt this device at the last moment as a means of assuring liberty and comfortable treatment in England? The former view is that which is taken by nearly all French historians. The latter alternative is affirmed by Captain Maitland of H.M.S. "Bellerophon," as well as by British writers, almost without exception. In order to understand the situation, we must briefly recall the chief facts. After Waterloo, Napoleon rapidly returned to Paris in the hope of stimulating the Chambers to renewed efforts on his behalf; but they refused, they urged him to abdicate, and finally gave him one hour in which to perform that act on his own initiative: he did so on June 22nd. He then retired to Malmaison, near Saint-Cloud, while the Chambers appointed a Commission to carry on the government and sent General Becker to guard the ex-Emperor. As the rapid advance of the Prussians endangered his safety, Becker was charged to get him away to Rochefort, where two frigates would be ready to carry him to the United States. A request was sent to Wellington to grant a permit for his passage through the British cruisers, but the Duke refused to sign one. Pursuant to an order of the Commission, Napoleon left Malmaison on the 29th and reached Rochefort on July 3rd. Bertrand, Savary, Gourgaud and Becker travelled with him; and he was there joined by Montholon and his wife, Las Cases, Mme. Bertrand, and a few others. But they found the British cruisers ready for them. "There are always in sight two or three

frigates," writes Gourgaud on the 4th in his "Journal," "and one or two ships-of-the-line."

How came the British ships to be guarding Rochefort so closely? Our Admiralty and Foreign Office records supply us with the reason. For some time past rumours had been afloat that Napoleon intended to make off to the United States. The earliest hint of this kind that I can find in our archives is a letter from a M. de Bécourt, No. 5, Cul-de-sac Dauphin, Paris, of May 14th, 1815, warning Mr. Musgrave, of the Alien Office, that this would be Napoleon's refuge in case of disaster. It was followed later on by a request for a reward for the information. "Il est d'autant plus facile à l'Amirauté de me gratifier que le *Monstre* a dû emporter de chez nous des sommes considérables."[1]

A considerable naval force was soon sent to the coast of Brittany to aid the Royalists there against Napoleon's government, and the coasts of Normandy and the Bay of Biscay were closely watched. As soon as news of the battle of Waterloo arrived, this vigilance was redoubled both in the Channel and the Bay of Biscay. Admiral Lord Keith, commander at Plymouth, kept as many as thirty ships cruising in the Bay, the inner line close to the principal ports, while the reserves patrolled the waters directly between Ushant and Finisterre. Admiral Hotham, in the "Superb," along with other warships, and eight transports having on board 16,278 muskets and stores for the Royalists, was at Quiberon Bay. The "Bellerophon," a seventy-four line-of-battle ship, under Captain Maitland, was off Rochefort, supported by the corvettes "Slaney," "Myrmidon," "Cyrus" and "Daphne."

[1] "Foreign Office Archives," France, No. 123.

On July 8th, 1815, after receiving Admiralty orders, Hotham wrote to Maitland that he was to use every exertion to intercept Napoleon, should he, as was expected, try to escape to America. Maitland must search every ship, and, if he secured him, must bring him at once to Torbay, keeping the transaction a profound secret: the captain had no authority to make stipulations of surrender or to treat Napoleon otherwise than as a prisoner of war.[1]

Hotham's reports show that he felt more and more anxious about Rochefort, where two French frigates were known to be ready for sea, and whither it was believed that the ex-Emperor had proceeded. On July 13th Hotham in the "Superb" set sail for Rochefort, and the "Liffey" was kept cruising off the mouth of the Gironde. These dispositions were taken just in time to attain the desired end.

Overtures had been made to Maitland on July 10th by Napoleon's agents, Savary (Duc de Rovigo) and Count Las Cases, with the aim of inducing him to allow the ex-Emperor and his suite to retire to the United States, for which purpose he hoped that passports would be granted by the British government. The letter written by General Bertrand on this subject, and Maitland's answer, are given by our officer in his "Narrative," and therefore need not appear here. The captain acted with much skill. Bertrand's letter, of July 9th, only asked for information as to the passports and whether Maitland would oppose the refugees' leaving

[1] The instructions are printed in full in Sir W. Scott's "Life of Napoleon," ix. 54; and in Maitland's "Narrative of the Surrender of Bonaparte," pp. 16-26. They refute Thiers' assertion that we were not expecting Napoleon's escape from Rochefort.

the Basque Roads, off Rochefort, in the two frigates or in a merchantman. Maitland replied that he could not allow any ship of war to leave; as to Napoleon's sailing in a merchantman, he could not allow that without having the sanction of Admiral Hotham. He at once sent off to Hotham the following note which is here published for the first time:

"10th July, 1815.

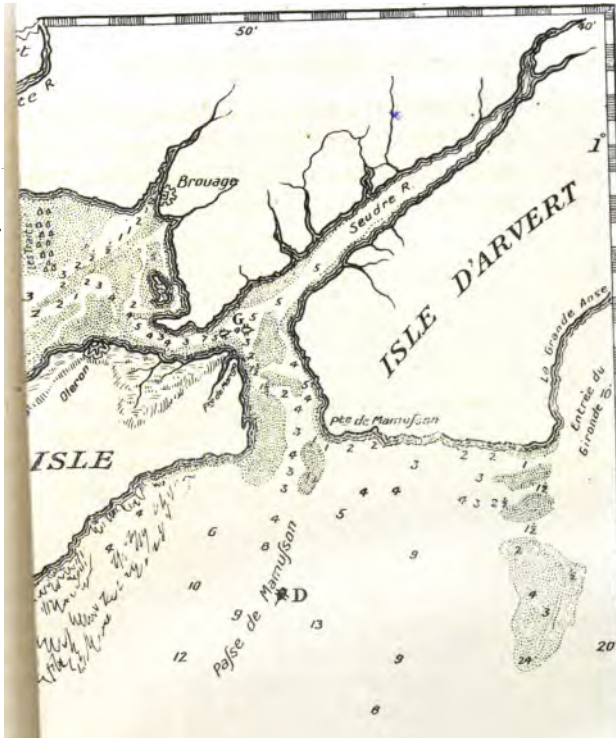
"I send back the 'Falmouth' without a moment's loss of time with the accompanying dispatch which I received this morning, by a schooner bearing a flag of truce, from the hands of the Duc de Rovigo and Count de las Cases. I likewise send my answer which I have given to gain time, as I do not, of course, wish that Buonaparte should be aware there are such strict orders respecting him. The two people who brought me the letter seem very anxious to convince me that the peace of Europe is concerned in Buonaparte being allowed to depart quietly, and that he will still be enabled to join the army in the centre and south of France and make some stand; and even venture to throw out a hint that if I refuse to give my sanction to the frigates passing, that they *might* endeavour to force their way, to which I replied—'As far as my power goes, I shall do my best to prevent you.' I shall therefore keep as close in as possible to present the attempt being made, or, if made, to frustrate it.

"He seems desirous of going in a neutral, should a refusal be sent to his proposal of going in the frigates. If the frigates come out, I shall direct the captain of the corvette ['Myrmidon'] to stick to the one (if they separate) while I manage the other: and as I have the first lieutenant and one hundred of the stoutest men in the ship ready to throw on board after having given the first fire, I hope very soon to be at liberty to join in the pursuit of the second.

"It appears to me, from the anxiety the bearers express to get away, that they are very hard pressed either by the Government at Paris or from the approach of the [allied] armies. . . ."

If Napoleon hoped to get the better of our officer by this overture, he was disappointed. Maitland evaded giving a direct reply to the ex-Emperor's proposal to leave in a neutral ship, and in such a way as to bring Hotham on the scene. Whereas, if Napoleon had sent no letter and had directed the frigates to sail down the middle channel—that between Oléron and Ré—while he set sail in a neutral merchantman for the Pertuis Breton to the north of Ré, he might possibly have escaped. The sending the overture to Maitland was a fatal blunder: it brought the "Bellerophon," "Myrmidon," and "Slaney" so close to the Ile d'Aix that flight was thenceforth scarcely possible by the two practicable channels just named. There remained a third outlet, the narrow, winding, and shallow Passe de Mamusson, south of the Ile d'Oléron; but this was now watched by H.M.S. "Daphne," while H.M.S. "Cyrus" cruised off the Pertuis Breton. [See the accompanying plan of the three channels and positions of ships, as taken from that in Maitland's "Narrative."]

The journals of Gourgaud, Montholon, and Las Cases (I give them in the order of their trustworthiness) show us the perplexity and hesitations that meanwhile prevailed among Napoleon's suite. On the 8th they went on board the "Saale." On the 9th an order reached them from the Provisional Government at Paris to leave France within twenty-four hours, not disembarking on French territory. Doubtless this explains why they made overtures to Maitland. Never-



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hip Bellerophon when under sail.

Ships Bellerophon and Slaney on the evening of the 14th of

when Buonaparte was received on board the 15th.

M. Ship Myrmidon was ordered to take upon the evening of

ly.

Ship Cyrus off the Baleine Lighthouse.

Ship Daphne off Mamusson.

Saale and Meduse and Brig Epervier. Buonaparte embarked

July 3rd, 1815.

es, manned and officered from the Frigates, prepared to aid

escape in the event of Las Cases's mission to the Bellerophon

c, &c., in Mamusson passage.

in French fathoms, one of which is equal to 5 feet 5 inches

theless, four plans of escape were discussed on July 10th-13th: (1) to sacrifice the French frigate "Méduse" in a fight *à outrance* with the "Bellerophon," while Napoleon made off in the "Saale"; (2) to escape concealed amidst the ballast of a Danish sloop anchored near l'Ile d'Aix; (3) to proceed overland to the corvette "Bayadère," moored in the Gironde; (4) to slip away in two large fishing-craft, *chasse-marées*, by the Pertuis Breton.

Let us see what came of these plans. The first was abandoned because the captain of the "Saale" refused his assent, and the ex-Emperor also declined to sacrifice a ship. As to the second, Montholon states that, when all the arrangements had been made, Napoleon drew back, hesitating to trust his safety to a merchantman. Perhaps he feared treachery. The third was impossible now that the government forbade his return to the mainland, and the populace became more and more royalist. The *chasse-marée* scheme also offered scant hopes. It was known that all the channels were guarded, and that beyond the first line of British cruisers were others that searched every vessel. Gourgaud states that, when pressed by Napoleon for his counsel, he advised him to throw himself on the generosity of the English rather than flee on a fishing-boat that would probably be taken. Savary advised the *chasse-marée* plan, but all the rest, including the officers that were to man the craft, disapproved of it; and so did Napoleon.

Montholon states that, on the 13th, Joseph Bonaparte came to l'Ile d'Aix, where the ex-Emperor then was, to propose that they should change uniforms, Napoleon proceeding secretly to Bordeaux, whence

Joseph had arranged for a passage to America. It is difficult to get at the truth of this. Gourgaud, who was all day with his master and enjoyed his confidence, says nothing of it, though he refers to mysterious proposals from Bordeaux; and Bertrand, in a letter of July 14th to the ex-King, says nothing of this romantic offer. Besides, on the 12th and 13th the Danish merchantman scheme seems to have been again to the fore, and was only given up late at night. Thiers relates that this sudden change was due to the sobs of the Countesses Bertrand and Montholon, and other ladies; but we may safely assume that there was some more practical reason, such as that assigned by Montholon and stated above. It was doubtless known that Maitland would stop and thoroughly search any vessel that left the Basque Roads. Indeed, he received a letter from Captain Aylmer, of H.M.S. "Pactolus," off the Gironde, to warn him that Napoleon was about to attempt escaping from those roads in the Danish sloop, concealed in a cask, with tubes for breathing. Savary afterwards confessed that this had been talked of and the vessel prepared for it, but that the plan was given up as too hazardous. The vessel was a very small one, with a crew of four hands.

A brief survey of these schemes shows us how hard-pressed Napoleon was; and every day thus spent in doubt and delay aggravated his difficulties. On the 12th came the news of the entry of the allies into Paris, of the collapse of the Provisional Commission, and of the general hoisting of the white flag throughout France. Further hints of the most urgent nature also reached Napoleon that the only alternatives were an immediate departure or an ignominious arrest; and

on the night of the 13th he dictated the famous appeal to the Prince Regent, declaring that he would come, like Themistocles, to seat himself at the hearth of the British people. Early on the morrow the letter was taken to the "Bellerophon" by Las Cases and General Gourgaud; whereupon Maitland at once informed them that he would receive Bonaparte on board and take him to England, forwarding Gourgaud also on the "Slaney" with the letter to the Prince Regent. Maitland's words to Las Cases on the subject of Napoleon's future were as follows:—"Monsieur Las Cases, you will recollect that I am not authorized to stipulate as to the reception of Bonaparte in England, but that he must consider himself entirely at the disposal of His Royal Highness the Prince Regent." The Captain afterwards bitterly regretted that he did not put down these words in writing and require Las Cases' signature to them, as should certainly have been done in an affair of this immense importance; but they were spoken in presence of Captain Sartorius, of the "Slaney," who afterwards fully corroborated Maitland's account of the transaction. So also does Montholon, who, at Plymouth, took Maitland's part when Las Cases accused him of having entrapped them by a false promise. "Oh," said Montholon, "Las Cases is disappointed in his expectations; and as he negotiated the affair, he attributes the Emperor's situation to himself; but I can assure you that he [Bonaparte] feels convinced you have acted like a man of honour throughout."[1]

As Napoleon himself, outwardly at least, adopted

[1] Maitland's "Narrative," pp. 58, 238-248; Montholon's "Captivity of Napoleon," i., ch. 3.

the theory that Maitland had deceived them by false representations, it will be well to quote the testimony of Admiral Hotham. The Admiral arrived on the "Superb" in Basque Roads early on July 15th, an hour or two after Bonaparte and his suite had embarked on board the "Bellerophon." He at once inspected the correspondence, approved Maitland's conduct, and had an interview with Napoleon on board the flag-ship. Recounting these affairs in a hitherto unpublished despatch sent on to Mr. Croker at Paris, he writes:

"You may, if you please, assure Lord Castlereagh that no terms, nor promises, nor expectations of any kind were made, or held out, to Bonaparte either by Captain Maitland or by me: and he was distinctly told through the Count Lascasse [*sic*], who was sent with the proposal for his embarking, that all Captain Maitland could do was to carry him and his suite to England, to be received in such a manner as his Royal Highness might deem expedient. He [Napoleon] appeared extremely anxious to learn how I thought he would be disposed of, but equally confident in the generosity and magnanimity of the Prince Regent and the English Nation. . . ."

This testimony of a third party, written before there was any thought that Maitland's version would be disputed by Las Cases, is of some importance. Napoleon, after embarking on the "Bellerophon," visited Hotham on the "Superb," and would certainly have contested Maitland's treatment of him as other than an imperial personage who had come on board *unconditionally*, if at that time he had determined to assert his imperial dignity and his right to complete freedom in England. The fact of his letting Hotham see his anxiety shows

how ambiguous and threatening he saw his position to be. The details set forth above prove conclusively that he was absolutely at the end of his resources, and that his appeal to the magnanimity of the British government was only a last ingenious device for glozing over the very palpable truth that he was a prisoner of war. A man who is driven into a corner, and then comes forth with an appeal to the generosity of his foes, is as really a prisoner as if he were captured.[1]

There are grounds for believing that Napoleon hoped to avail himself of the eccentricities of our law in order to gain the privileges of *habeas corpus*. On his arrival at Torbay, and thereafter at Plymouth, he and his suite were much encouraged by the swarm of boats that pressed near to the "Bellerophon," filled with interested or even enthusiastic spectators; and Admiral Lord Keith, who now became responsible for his safe-keeping, was apprehensive of an escape or rescue. Keith wrote in his despatch of August 1st to the Admiralty:

"It is become necessary that I am most careful; for the General and many of his suite have an idea that if

[1] I cannot agree with Lord Rosebery ("Napoleon: Last Phase," p. 111) that his chances of escape were fairly good. The French officers of his suite examined all the plans and decided against each in turn. Montholon says that he himself and Gourgaud were for escape; this is wrong. Gourgaud's journal proves that he advised going on the "Bellerophon." As to the Gironde, it was watched at that time by H.M.S. "Pactolus" and "Liffey."

Las Cases ("Mémorial," iii. 348) later on admitted that escape was impossible: "Plus tard, quand il n'y eut plus d'autre ressource que d'accepter l'hospitalité du 'Bellerophon,' peut-être ce ne fut pas sans une espèce de secrète satisfaction intérieure qu'il s'y voyait irrésistiblement amené par la force des choses: être en Angleterre c'était ne pas s'être éloigné de la France."

they could but put foot on shore no Power could remove them, and they are determined to make the attempt if at all possible; they are becoming most refractory, and talk of resisting the Emperor being taken out of the ship. I desired Captain Maitland to inform those gentlemen that if such language was continued I should feel obliged to have recourse to a more rigorous mode of confinement." [1]

This was after they had been informed that another ship would take them to their destination, St. Helena.

What led the British Government to fix on St. Helena as Napoleon's place of detention? There are vague rumours that it was recommended at the Congress of Vienna early in the year. But the Duke of Wellington always asserted that it was never named there; and the rumour seems to have originated with newspapers. It finds no place in the official records of the Congress. But as soon as Napoleon's surrender, after the second abdication, seemed probable, Lord Liverpool named St. Helena as one of the desirable places of confinement, along with Gibraltar, Malta, or the Cape.[2] When his surrender was actually known (July 21st), Lord Melville and Mr. Barrow, of the Admiralty, advised St. Helena, because it was a "particularly healthy" place, whence his escape would be most difficult, seeing that neutrals could be excluded if it were thought desirable. The matter was settled by the

[1] "F.O.," France, No. 123.

[2] Letters to Castlereagh of July 15th, 21st, and 28th, 1815 ("Castlereagh Papers," Series III., vol. ii.). These and the memorandum following refute the partisan statement of Lord Holland ("Foreign Reminiscences," p. 196) that the government had been treating with the East India Company for the cession of St. Helena *early in* 1815.

Ministry by July 28th. The famous Themistocles simile had no influence on events. Napoleon's doom was pronounced in March by the plenipotentiaries of the Powers at Vienna, when they declared him an outlaw. And it is certain that if he had fallen into the hands of the Prussians they would have shot him.[1]

If any doubt remained as to the desirability of St. Helena, it was ended by the following memorandum, drawn up on July 29th by General Beatson, formerly Governor of the island. It was then a possession of our East India Company, whose very extensive privileges would allow of the exclusion of neutral ships—the great source of insecurity at Elba.

"There are undoubtedly several local circumstances peculiar to the island of St. Helena which seem to render it pre-eminently suitable to the purpose of confining a State prisoner. Its remote situation from all parts of the globe, its compact form and size, the small numbers of its inhabitants, amongst whom no stranger can introduce himself without immediate detection, together with the extraordinary formation of the island, being encompassed on all sides by stupendous and almost perpendicular cliffs rising to the height of from six to more than twelve hundred feet, and through which there are but few inlets to the interior, are collectively such a variety of natural advantages that perhaps they are not to be equalled. . . .

"The only accessible landing-places are James Town, Rupert's Bay, and Lemon Valley on the north, and Sandy Bay on the south. All these points are well fortified by Fleur d'eau batteries, furnished (except

[1] See Blücher's and Gneisenau's letters in Müffling's "Passages from my Life," Appendix, along with Wellington's protest against shooting him.

Sandy Bay) with Furnaces for heating shot, and as cannon are also placed upon the cliffs in their vicinity, far above the reach of ships, it may readily be imagined that if a Martello Tower with one gun could beat off a 74 ship in the Mediterranean, how much more efficacious would be those preparations for defence in the Island of St. Helena. In short, it appeared to be the opinion of several experienced naval officers, who have recently visited that Island, that no ships could possibly stand the fire of the defences which protect the anchorage and the whole of the northern coast . . . and the southern is equally secure against a naval attack. . . . The precipitous pathways should, of course, be attended to and guarded, and they might easily be defended by rolling stones from the heights . . .

"A great acquisition has lately resulted from an admirable establishment of telegraphs. These are placed upon the most commanding heights, and are so connected and so spread all over the Island that no vessel can approach without being descried at the distance of sixty miles. Nothing can pass in any part, or even in sight of the Island, without being instantly known to the Governor. . . . In short, the whole Island can be under arms at a moment's warning. . . ."[1]

Napoleon vehemently protested against this destination when it was announced to him on July 31st by Sir Henry Bunbury and Lord Keith. The very full

[1] The last sentences show us why the Company expressly forbade the use of the Governor's house to Napoleon: it was the centre of the telegraphs or semaphores of the island.

A despatch of Sir H. Lowe of June 2nd, 1816, gives a different estimate of the strength of the fortifications. He says the batteries were either so low as to be commanded by ships-of-war or so high as not to be able to hit a moving object: he wanted "at least twenty depressing carriages for 24- and 32-pounders to be sent."

notes of this conversation forwarded to London by the former, and endorsed by the latter as correct, have been published in Allardyce's "Memoirs of Lord Keith"; but they are so little known that we may give the most important parts of them here.

"He received the paper, laid it on the table, and after a pause he began with declaring his solemn protest against this proceeding of the British Government, that they had not the right to dispose of him in this manner, and that he appealed to the British people and to the laws of this country. He then asked what was the tribunal, or if there was not a tribunal, where he might prefer his appeal against the illegality and injustice of this decision. 'I am come here voluntarily,' said he, 'to place myself on the hearth of your nation, and to claim the rights of hospitality. I am not even a prisoner of war. If I were a prisoner of war, you would be bound to treat me according to the law of nations. But I am come to this country a passenger on board one of your ships of war after a previous negotiation with the commander. If he had told me I was to be a prisoner, I should not have come. I asked him if he was willing to receive me and my suite on board and to carry me to England. Admiral [*sic*] Maitland answered that he would—and this after having received and after telling me that he had received, the special orders of his Government concerning me. C'étoit donc un piège qu'on m'a tendu. In coming on board a British Ship of War, I confided myself to the hospitality of the British People as much as if I had entered one of their Towns. Un vaisseau, un village, tout cela est égal. Quant à l'Ile de Ste. Hélène, c'est l'arrêt de ma mort. I protest against being sent thither, and I protest against being imprisoned in a fortress in this country. I demand to be received as an English citizen.

"I know indeed that I cannot be admitted to the

Rights of an Englishman at first. Some years are requisite to entitle one to be domiciliated. Well, let the Prince Regent place me during that time under any surveillance he may think proper. Let me be put in a Country House in the centre of the Island, thirty leagues from any sea. Place a commissioner about me to examine my correspondence and to report my actions, and if the Prince Regent should require my parole, perhaps I would give it. There I could have a certain degree of personal liberty, and I could enjoy the Liberty of Literature. In St. Helena I should not live three months. With my habits and constitution, it would be immediate Death. I am used to ride twenty leagues a day. What am I to do on that little rock at the end of the world? The climate is too hot for me. No, I will not go to St. Helena. Botany Bay is better than St. Helena. If your Government wishes to put me to death, they may kill me here. It is not worth while to send me to St. Helena. I prefer death to St. Helena. And what good is my death to do you? I can do you no harm. I am no longer a sovereign: I am a simple individual. Besides, times and affairs are altered. What danger could result from my living as a private person in the heart of England, under surveillance, and restricted in any way that the Government might think necessary. . . . What was there to force me to the step I took? The tricolour flag was still flying at Bordeaux, at Nantes, at Rochefort. The army has not submitted at this hour. I could have joined them. Or if I had chosen to remain in France, what could have prevented my remaining concealed for years among a people who were all attached to me? But I preferred to settle as a private individual in England. . . . If you now kill me it will be an eternal disgrace to the Prince Regent, to your Government, and to the Nation. It will be a piece of cowardice without example! I have offered the Prince Regent the finest page of his history! I am his enemy, and I place myself at his discretion. I have

been the greatest enemy of your country. I have made war upon you for twenty years—and I do you the highest honour, and give you the greatest proof of my confidence, by placing myself voluntarily in the hands of my most constant and inveterate enemies.'"

The rest of the conversation was of the same general tenor. Our two officials made their bow and retired.

Napoleon's departure from Plymouth took place on August 4th; it was hastened by an effort of his friends on shore to serve a writ of the King's Bench on Lord Keith to compel him to produce the person of Napoleon Bonaparte *as a witness* in a libel suit then pending in London. This suspicious occurrence showed what might have been expected if Napoleon had settled in our midst: and Keith, while dodging the lawyer, urged Maitland to put to sea at once. The transference to the "Northumberland" was effected near Berry Head on August 7th.[1]

The acceleration of his departure from Plymouth, due to the ill-advised action of his friends in London, led to the interception of four letters that were intended for him. The first of these was from an admirer of his named Captain Lofft, of Bury, Suffolk, praying that a blessing might fall on "the greatest and most illustrious of men." The second is of more interest, and I print it here as it may possibly supply a missing link of Bonaparte's early and little-known days at Valence. It is from Miss Eliza M'Kinnon, of Binfield, near Bracknell, Berks, dated July 30th, 1815, to Napoleon,

[1] "Last Voyages of Napoleon," p. 93. [I may add that I have failed to find out the truth about that alleged case of libel. I doubt whether the suit was ever formally preferred.—J. H. R.]

stating that her mother had known him. She incloses a copy of the letter to the following effect:

"Binfield, Berkshire, 1811.

"Ce pourrait-il, Sire, que dans la carrière immense de Gloire que Vous avez parcouru, vous daignassiez encore prendre quelqu' intérêt au sort d'une persone que vous n'avez pas vue depuis plus de vingt ans? Cette Madame M'Kinnon, cette bonne Dame, cette tendre mère, vit toujours: elle a sçue [*sic*] avec surprise et reconnaissance qu'élevé au trône le plus puissant du monde il vous a plu de vous rappeler du temps où une moindre destinée vous permettait de venir quelques fois vous délasser et passer la soirée auprès d'elle et de sa famille, habitant alors la ville de Valence en Dauphiné.

"Je ne me hazarderais pas ainsi de vous écrire, Sire, si l'on ne nous avoit point [?] dit que, durant la courte paix de 1800 [*sic*] vous aviez fait d'infructueuses demandes aux Anglais fréquentans votre Cour pour avoir quelques indices d'elle. Elle a passé sa vie peu connue du monde, d'une manière simple et retirée, pratiquant des leçons de vertu et de morale, les enseignant à ses enfans; et moi, Sire, l'unique fille qui reste auprès d'elle, j'ai ainsi osée répondre au vœu que dans votre bonté il vous a plu de témoigner d'avoir quelques renseignemens sur elle.

"J'ai l'honneur, etc.,
"ELIZABETH M'KINNON."

There is also a letter from Count Las Cases to Mr. Andrew, dated Plymouth, 27 juillet, 1815:

"Plymouth, 27 juillet, 1815.

"Il y a quelque tems que j'ai eu l'honneur de vous écrire et de vous prier de vouloir bien passer chez Mr. Dorrien, Banquier, et en retirer le paquet *x*, *y*, *z*, remis

par moi chez lui le 20 octobre, 1814, en dépôt, et contenant 2000*l.* en India Bonds. Ils sont ma propriété, et je vous prie de les remettre à Lady Clavering, qui a de moi prière d'en disposer ainsi qu'elle le jugera pour le mieux."[1]

But the most important by far was that addressed on the cover to Mme. Bertrand, but really written to Napoleon. It is from an Italian, devoted to Napoleon, residing probably in London, and penned, as the second paragraph shows, on August 2nd. It is in the "Colonial Office Records, St. Helena," vol. i. I give it with all its grammatical and other errors, as they are in the original. By "*le Silène* de cette Isle," obviously the Prince Regent is meant.

"*À S.M.I. Napoleone.*

"Sire,—Votre Majesté n'ignore point les intentions du Conseil à votre égard, qui sont—non de vous faire mourir, mais bien de vous enterrer vif—puisqu'ils vous destinent pour l'Isle Ste. Helene dans l'autre Hemisphere—ce vil Rocher fourmillant de rats—et dont la plus proche Terre-Ferme se trouve être la cote sauvage d'Afrique Meridionale a quatre cent lieues de loin. En ceci certes ils ne suivent point l'exemple de la conduite tenue par V.M. en France vis à vis du Duc d'Angoulême.

"Conformèment au desir que quelque Argent fut placè commodement pour le service de V.M., Je me fais un devoir d'annoncer qu'aujourd'hui—le second d'Août—seize mille livres Sterling, qui font à peu près 368,000 livres Tournois, ont été remise [*sic*]—especes sonnantes—en bonnes mains ici pour le compte de V.M. On s'est chargé d'expedier les signatures avec lettres de creance, portant quatre mille livres Sterling,

[1] Lady Clavering was French by extraction.

ou environ 36,000 et quelques Ecus, chaque, aux quatre Villes principales de Boston—Neuve York—Philadelfi [*sic*] et Charleston. Apres l'operation faite on aura soin de vous faire tenir les noms de ces Maisons. Voila donc, qu'ils auront beau vous depouiller sur le Vaisseau, puisque vous serez toujours a porté des mêmes moyens par un coup de plûme. Les occasions d'employer cette plume s'offriront bien, sans doute, avec le Thé de la Chine, où les Mouselines de l'Inde; mais si il en manquait du hazard, il sera facile d'en faire presenter. Alors en cas de reusite en l'Amèrique Septentrionale V.M. vivrait a son gré jusqu'à ce que le Tems, qui vient à bout de tout, put ramener les circonstances favorable a reparaitre en Europe pour reclamer un Trone le plus beau de l'Univers, lequel, sans contredit, revient encore de droit à Votre Majestè, en ce qu'il est constant que le condition attachèe à l'abdication en faveur de votre auguste Fils, ne se trouve point remplie. Il est vrai que tout cela poura couter a V.M. quelques annèes d'une vie precieuse au bonheur de la France, et peutetre que chose plus simple serait de daigner faire vos remonstrances contre le voyage de Ste. Helene quand ce ne serait que pour gagner du tems. J'ose dire que si vous parveniez seulement a reculer ce depart, V.M. n'irait point de tout. L'Angleterre est à la veille de voir le Spectacle singulier d'un changement des Ministres du Roi, à la fois independamment du Parlement, qui en cette Saison ne siege point, et a l'insu du Prince Gouvernant. Je le tiens d'une part a n'en pas douter, que les Anciens Officiers Reformè de l'Armée, qui meurent de faim, indignè de se voir non compris dans une augmentation des Pensions de Retraite qui parait avoir eu lieu l'Ans passé en faveur seulement de ceux qui ont fait les campagnes de cette derniere guerre, et outrè par leur misère, ont formè une Ligue de Vengeance. Apres plus de Six mois que la trame s'ourdit, la perte du premier ministre et d'un autre est decidée, et les coups de deplacement

vont etre portè. Dejà la mèche brule: pour l'eclat de la bombe il ne manque plus que le mot d'ordre. Leverpol [*sic*] est a la Campagne. Si un relachment a Plimout, de seulement quelques Semaines, pouvait toutefois s'arranger avec les Puissances actueles apres V.M. aurait a faire a gens d'une autre trempe. Car, quant au ——, il n'y entre pour rien. Tant que du tresor on a soin d'alimenter ses luxes, il est insouciant du reste. Faineant, assoupi sur tous ses devoirs, blasé sur tous les plaisirs, c'est le SILENE de cette Isle. Cependant, vù l'absence de l'Armèe, ces Messieurs sachant bien que la presence de V.M. fermente les esprits, s'empressent a hater votre eloignment. Je fonds donc mon espoir avant tout sur les Navires marchands, Anglais comme autres, par l'apas du gain. Cette voye est a la veritè la plus tardive mais aussi peut-etre sera t'elle la plus sure.

" Dieu conserve votre Majestè

" Pour le salut de vos jours ne cesse de prier de V.M.
le fidel sujet et devouè serviteur

(Piece torn off here.)

" Le [bruit cou?]rt que le Prince Lucien est entre les mains des Autrichiens en Savoye. Balsac et Mouton n'attendent que la nouvelle sure du depart de V.M. pour aller se rendre aux ordres de M. Gastinel."

[The letter bears the address:

" A Madame Countess de Bertrand
" At bord the Ship of his Majesty
" Bellerophon,
" At Plymouth."

Below, in red ink, is the postal mark, " Gone to St. Helena." The covering letter of Admiral Cockburn states that this letter and those of Miss M'Kinnon and Captain Lofft reached him, viâ the Cape, on December 26th, 1815. He at once returned them to England.]

The despatches that passed between our Government and Sir Hudson Lowe show that this intercepted letter supplied to us the first hint of Napoleon's funds being transferred to four towns of the United States in order to aid his escape from St. Helena; and a letter of Sir H. Bunbury (of March 6th, 1816) asserts that our Government had never found out the names of the firms entrusted with the sums here named.[1]

It is obviously impossible within the limits of this article to refer to the great mass of St. Helena controversies. We can only notice some of the chief questions, on which rays of light can here and there be thrown from our archives.

A great deal of odium was cast upon the Governor, Sir Hudson Lowe, for his strict enforcement of the new regulations that came out from England, and formed the basis of the regulations of October 9th, 1816.[2] They imposed stricter surveillance of letters, a limitation of the visitors to those to whom Lowe himself first granted permission, and a restriction of the bounds within which Napoleon might take exercise, unaccompanied by a British officer, to a space having a circumference of about eight miles. Many persons, including even the Duke of Wellington, scoffed at these regulations as foolishly strict, and asserted that Napoleon ought to have been allowed to go about the island where he liked, provided that all the landing-places were guarded. But if we look into our Government records we see that our officials were aware of schemes of rescue

[1] Quoted on p. 54 of the Memorial which Sir H. Lowe drew up and sent to the Ministry.

[2] See, for a very little known estimate of Lowe's character, the passage quoted in Appendix, p. 521.

(other than the general information just quoted) which would have rendered such liberty highly dangerous. Forsyth refers to several schemes, but I have come across one that he does not name. It was hatched in the United States. Our Ministers had all along feared that rescue expeditions might come from that land, where Joseph Bonaparte was residing; and it was this which induced Rear-Admiral Cockburn, who took Napoleon to St. Helena, to annex the Island of Ascension lest it should become a *point d'appui* for rescuers. In our Foreign Office Records ("France," No. 123) is a despatch, dated August, 1816, Downing Street, transmitting news of an expedition reported to have as its object the carrying off of Napoleon. Directions are given that it is to be sent on to Sir Pulteney Malcolm, then the Admiral in command at St. Helena, and to Sir H. Lowe, the Governor. The covering letter is signed by Adam Gordon:

"*Renseignemens transmis à l'Ambassadeur sur l'objet d'un Armement secret parti de Baltimore* 14 *juin.*

"Quatre goëlettes et autres petits batimens légers ont fait voile récemment de Baltimore munis des équipages ordinaires, mais ayant en lest [*sic*] un certain nombre de pièces d'artillerie. Cette escadre fut rejointe dans la Baye par de Pilotes cetiers [?] qui lui amenèrent trois cent hommes de renfort. L'expédition, commandée par un nommé Fournier, ancien officier de marine de Bonaparte, et qui l'avoit suivi à l'Ile d'Elbe, étoit destinée, suivant les bruits répandus, pour se joindre aux forces de Bolivar; mais des renseignemens ultérieurs et plus certains lui donnent pour but la délivrance de Bonaparte.

"L'enlèvement doit se faire de la manière suivante

"Les bâtimens, fins voileurs, se tiendront pendant le jour hors de vue: ils s'approcheront sur différens points, et enverront dans une chaloupe de chaque bâtiment un homme habillé en soldat anglais. Ils porteront à Bonaparte des dépêches qui lui annonceront le projet d'enlèvement et les différens points sur lesquels des chaloupes se dirigeront de nuit pour le recevoir. Cette opération se répétera jusqu'à ce qu'il trouve une occasion favorable. Des fonds considérables en or et en diamans seront mis à sa disposition pour corrompre ceux qui pourront lui être nécessaires. On paraît se flatter d'une coopération certaine de la part de certains individus domiciliés ou employés à Ste. Hélène."

The information here given is somewhat like that contained in the "Lettre du Comte Molé au Duc de Richelieu," of September 22nd, 1817, which is printed in Appendix 6 of M. Firmin-Didot's edition of Montchenu's Reports, entitled "La Captivité de Ste.-Hélène"; but the details printed above seem to me more practical than those of the plan referred to by Count Molé. The last sentences of the passage just quoted deserve special notice; they show the need of excessive vigilance on the part of the night sentries round Longwood. Sir Hudson Lowe's order that the sentinels were to be posted at sunset, instead of, as previously, at 9 p.m., was deeply resented by Napoleon, and we can now see why. The time after sunset was highly favourable to his escape from Longwood until communication could be effected with one of the rescue parties. The news above quoted must have reached Lowe early in October, 1816, and fully justified him in planting the sentries at sundown.

Other schemes of escape or rescue are referred to by Forsyth and need not be described here. Some of them

are absurd enough and offer excellent butts to the shafts of Lord Rosebery's raillery. We enjoy the wit; and yet we ask ourselves whether it was not a feature of Napoleon's diplomacy, as well as of his strategy, to throw his opponents off their guard. We know that his lethargy and somnolence at Elba, on which our Commissioner, Sir Neil Campbell, laid such stress in his reports in the autumn of 1814, had the effect of dulling the suspicions of that officer. Indeed, it is by no means unlikely that the inmates of Longwood and their friends in Europe and America, with whom they were able to keep up a secret correspondence, designedly put forward stupid plans of rescue so as to prepare the way for some really serious attempt when the authorities should have relaxed their vigilance.

If so, they failed. Lowe was not to be caught napping; and a passage in Lord Holland's "Foreign Reminiscences" (p. 301) suggests, as one reason for this ceaseless vigilance of his, that he knew how mercilessly Campbell had been ridiculed for letting Napoleon slip away from Elba. Lowe, it is true, had infinitely greater powers than Campbell; and the passage quoted above now enables us to see that he was forewarned in good time as to one, at least, of the possible methods of escape. Accordingly he took every precaution to prevent it. The regulations of October 9th, 1816, were almost certainly due to the knowledge possessed by the Home Government and Lowe that a rescue expedition either was, or might be, hovering about St. Helena; and other precautions of an earlier date were put in force more stringently than before. Among the latter was the requiring Napoleon's presence at Longwood to be ascertained by the British

officer there on duty—a truly pitiful task when the great man chose, as he often did, to secrete himself for days or weeks at a time. But surely it was a necessary task, seeing that traitors were known to be on the island—probably within the precincts of Longwood itself. Sir Hudson Lowe was paid £12,000 a year to see that Napoleon did not escape; he took his duties seriously—who would not after Elba and Waterloo? —and was therefore unable to view the situation with the lambent humour and serene detachment that constitutes one of the many charms of Lord Rosebery's narrative. The standpoints of the Governor of St. Helena in 1816 and of a literary man in 1900, are, in truth, somewhat remote; and I submit that his lordship's criticism of our policy in St. Helena fails, firstly, because of this vital defect; secondly, because he has not studied the British archives where many of the reasons for our actions may be seen; and, thirdly, because of his exaggerated deference to French sources of information. I have elsewhere ventured to criticise some of the errors that have crept into his work from such sources;[1] and I can here only point out, with all respect, that a comparison of Napoleon's behaviour at St. Helena with that which he had maintained at Elba should have shown the noble author that the ex-Emperor's lethargy and nonchalance were perhaps but a blind to hide a determination to escape. At any rate, the official who was responsible for his safe-keeping could not relax his vigilance because his charge gave out that he did not want to make off, and preferred

[1] In my "Life of Napoleon I.," vol. ii., chs. 40-42 (G. Bell and Sons).

St. Helena to the United States. A dozen times over at Elba, Napoleon said that he had done with the world, and was virtually a dead man. Yet Waterloo was fought, for all that.

Another question which frequently led to disputes was that of the maintenance of the Longwood household by the British Government. As the pinch of national poverty was felt more and more at home after the great war, the need for effecting economies on all sides became more and more pressing. And in the summer of 1816 Lord Bathurst, the Minister for War and the Colonies, sent instructions that the annual sum expended on the Longwood establishment was not to exceed £8,000. Our archives yield curious proof of the care of Lowe's calculations on this matter. Several pages at a time are closely filled with figures based on varying estimates of outlay. We know that the Governor ultimately took upon himself to increase Lord Bathurst's estimate by one half, and these pages show why he did so. The cost of living in St. Helena had risen considerably since the arrival of Napoleon, his suite, the allied Commissioners, and the regiment charged with special guard duties; and the expenditure, which Sir Hudson thought to be *desirable*, amounted to no less a sum than £14,105 1*s.* 7*d.* He worked it out systematically as for "General Bonaparte," and six officers, two ladies, five children, thirteen French men-servants, fourteen British men-servants, three black servants, and six female servants —a total of fifty persons; in addition to which were the orderly officers, surgeon, and their three servants. The suitable daily expenditure on wine would have been as follows:

	s.	*d.*
"Claret (12 bottles)	6	0 [?]
Madeira (2 bottles)	5	10
Constantia (1 bottle) . . .	10	6
Champagne (1 bottle) . . .	10	6
Vin de Grave (1 bottle) . . .	6	0
Teneriffe (6 bottles) . . .	4	2

"Also commoner Cape wines and ration wines for soldiers and servants, besides ale and porter.

"On the same scale the estimate for meat would have been (*per diem*): fresh beef, 52 lbs.; fresh mutton, 36 lbs.; salt beef for soldiers and servants, 12 lbs.; also 4 ducks, 1 turkey, 1 goose, 12 pigeons, and 1 ham."

But, as has been seen, this came to an amount that Sir Hudson Lowe could not recommend; and he fixed the total at £12,000 *per annum*.

Is this to be called penurious? We hardly think so. Forsyth's narrative shows that there had been the most reckless waste by the Longwood household; and the items stated above, even when reduced by one seventh, must have yielded an excellent dietary. Besides, as we have already seen, our Ministers knew that Napoleon possessed large funds that were available for means of escape; and they could scarcely be expected to tax our hard-pressed people in order to furnish the superfluities of life to a State prisoner who was likely to use that abundance against them. If Napoleon needed a more generous table, he might surely be expected to use his funds in that direction, rather than in making presents to slaves and in buying over O'Meara.[1]

[1] That O'Meara was bought over is clear from the entry in Gourgaud's "Journal" (vol. ii., p. 346).

The appended note on Napoleon's expenditure for the months

I do not propose to enter into the question of the

October, 1815, to January, 1816, occurs in our archives: it is worth giving here:

"*État des dépenses que Mr. Balcombe est autorisé à payer sur les fonds de* 4,000 *napoléons.*

	£	s.	d.
"'Repartir: savoir:—			
'M. le Cte. de Las Cases	80	0	0
'M. le Génl. Montholon	80	0	0
'M. le Génl. Gourgaux [*sic*] . . .	80	0	0
'M. le Cap. Płontowski	40	0	0
'Aux domestiques de l'Empereur . .	360	0	0
'Au S. Marchand, pour solder la cassette et toilette de l'Empereur à 40 livres par mois, pour Octobre, Novembre, Décembre, 1815, et Janvier, 1816 . .	160	0	0
'Au S. Cypriani pour diverses ratifications	90	0	0
'Au S. Marchand pour provisions de Madère	23	8	0
'A la disposition de Génl. Montholon pour solder le Mémoire de Solomon . .	165	7	4
'Celui du magazin de la compagnie . .	198	16	2
'Dépenses d'habillement	27	0	0
'Pour commission, et à compte à Mr. Balcombe sur les payements ci-dessus .	85	12	0
'Phaéton arrivé du Cap	245	3	6
'Piano arrivé d'Angleterre . . .	122	0	0
	'£1,757	7	0

'(signé) BERTRAND.'"

In the "Admiralty Secret Letters" (1814-1815) is a list of the contract prices ruling at Cape Town and Simon's Town, dated November 11th, 1815: Fresh beef, 2¾*d.* per lb.; vegetables, 2¾*d.* per lb.; wine, £1 4*s.* 3*d.* per gal.; flour, £8 3*s.* per 100 lbs.; rice, 1*s.* 1*d.* per lb.; sugar, 2*s.* 3½*d.* per lb.; cocoa, 5*s.* 4*d.* per lb.; vinegar, £1 per gal.; tobacco, 6*s.* 5*d.* per lb.; soft bread [*sic*], 2¾*d.* per lb.; live oxen, £31 per head; live sheep, £3 per head; hay, £3 6*s.* per 100 lbs.

quarrels between Napoleon and Sir Hudson Lowe. The evidence adduced by Mr. Forsyth and Mr. Seaton shows that the Governor was far from being the aggressor; and the recently-published "Diary of Lady Malcolm at St. Helena" (p. 64) proves that in the last interview that passed between the ex-Emperor and the Governor it was the former who lost his temper, and not Sir Hudson Lowe. Thereafter they never exchanged a word. Our archives, however, supply many proofs that the Governor did not relax his efforts to ensure the comfort of the Longwood household. He was anxious to procure from Napoleon some expression of opinion as to the site of the new house, which was to take the place of that rambling domicile; but the exile refused to say where he would like it to be erected, and consequently the materials which had been brought from England and then dragged up by the soldiers to the Longwood plateau remained unused for many months—in fact until the ex-Emperor's life was fast waning. By a strange fatality, the new house neared completion just when Napoleon began to be confined to his bed at Longwood.

The last stages of Napoleon's illness are minutely described in our archives ("St. Helena," No, 32); and, as the professional account given to the world is that of the Corsican doctor, Antommarchi, who was notoriously untrustworthy, I think it well to cite here the later bulletins issued by the English doctor, Arnott: he was called in only on April 1st, 1821, and had no adequate control. The first of his reports refers to the illness in rather perplexing terms, and it is clear that he was misled by O'Meara's verdict of a liver disease caused or aggravated by the climate of St. Helena,

while Antommarchi thought it was gastric fever. It seems strange that Napoleon, who once or twice referred at table to his father having died of cancer of the stomach, did not suspect the nature of his own malady, and attributed the stabbing pain in his stomach to his liver, but such was the case. According to Bertrand, the end was near at hand before he fully realized the truth. "About a fortnight before his death" (wrote Bertrand to Joseph Bonaparte on September 10th, 1821) "he had pretty nearly guessed that he was dying of cancer. He often talked naturally as to the probable mode of his death, but, when he became aware that it was approaching, he left off speaking on the subject."

I now give the bulletins issued by Dr. Arnott from the time when the malady became desperate. Antommarchi and he were in attendance:

"*27th April.*—The following information was sent by Dr. Arnott from Longwood. 'I have been detained here since eleven o'clock. General Bonaparte is worse than I have seen him yet: he is much oppressed with vomiting: we can make nothing whatever rest on his stomach. In consequence of the constant vomiting he is very much exhausted.'

"He afterwards mentioned further—'His pulse continues good, and I am not apprehensive of anything serious taking place immediately, but the vomiting is very unpleasant.'

"The Governor, on being informed of these alarming appearances, immediately proceeded to Longwood to point out to Dr. Arnott the expediency of his recommending the calling in other medical advice. The symptoms at this time had somewhat abated; the pulse stood at 84.

"The Governor, having gone to Longwood, found Dr. Arnott, who had just left General Bonaparte, waiting for him. His account in every respect was in the highest degree unfavourable: he said that General Bonaparte had been attacked with vomiting more seriously than he had ever been before—that he threw up a great deal of black matter of a colour like coffee grounds:[1] that his voice had become much weaker than the day preceding, and that he was considerably more exhausted: appearances had become so alarming that he had thought it proper to inform Counts Montholon and Bertrand of his apprehensions that fatal symptoms might ensue, and he had suggested their calling in other medical assistance. This suggestion was followed up by an offer from the Governor to direct the instant attendance of any medical person whom it might be desired to consult with.

"*28th April.*—Dr. Arnott's information of this evening was as follows: 'I left General Bonaparte at eleven o'clock, and I am sorry to say he was nothing better. He had severe vomiting three times after I left you in the new House. The only change I could perceive in him was that I thought he did not talk so incoherently as he did in the morning. His obstinacy in refusing remedies ordered is most vexatious.'

"*29th.*—[Arnott reports a very bad night: delirious: three hours' sleep near dawn.]

"*30th.*—Arnott told the Governor before he had seen General Bonaparte this morning that he had prevailed upon him the day before to allow a blister to be put upon his stomach, and to take a lavament—that Dr. Antommarchi had also put two blisters on the inside of his thighs. Dr. Arnott saw General Bonaparte afterwards, and then mentioned as follows: 'I find General Bonaparte not worse than he was yesterday.

[1] Possibly this fact lent force to the malicious rumour that Lowe had sent Napoleon poisoned coffee?—[J. H. R.]

. . . I do not think he is more sunk than he was last night: however, he will take nothing, neither food nor medicine. Count Montholon told me he was up with him all night, and that towards this morning he had a hiccup, which if really the case I consider a *very* bad symptom.'

"1*st May*.—Sir Thomas Reade, having gone this morning at an early hour to Longwood, addressed the Governor afterwards as follows:—'I have just seen Dr. Arnott, who informs me he was called between eleven and twelve o'clock last night to attend General Bonaparte. Upon his arrival he saw Dr. Antommarchi, who told him the General had been seized suddenly with a cold fit, that he was as cold as ice, his pulse not perceptible, and he appeared as if he was suffocating; in fact Dr. Arnott said he thought he was dying.' Dr. Arnott proceeded immediately to General Bonaparte, but found him in the same state as he had left him about 6.30 in the evening. Dr. Antommarchi said he had become *restabilito* (re-established): his pulse was rather high, 90: it had been the same at 6.30. Dr. Arnott says the fits of vomiting are less frequent, and the matter which he throws up is not so alarming. Count Montholon told Dr. Arnott that he had communicated the Governor's letter offering other medical advice to General Bonaparte, who replied, 'No: I know I am dying—I have confidence in the people already about me, and I do not wish others to be called in.' Dr. Arnott considers General Bonaparte's case to be very alarming, from his refusal in particular to take either food or medicine. He had even pulled off the blister which Dr. Arnott had applied to his stomach, before it could produce any material effect."

Information from Dr. Arnott.

"9 P.M:—I left Longwood betwixt six and seven o'clock. He appeared composed when I left him, but

pertinaciously refused taking either nourishment or medicine. With great persuasion we prevailed upon him in the afternoon to take a draught, since which the hiccup has been less: at least it was when I left him."

[There follows a despatch of April 28th, from Sir H. Lowe to Count Montholon, urging the desirability of further medical advice, in which Rear-Admiral Lambert also concurred; Dr. Shortt, Physician to the Forces, is recommended. Also a report from Dr. Arnott at Deadwood, May 1st, to Sir H. Lowe, stating that he considered the case might terminate fatally. He had warned the Counts of this: "they seemed much affected at what I said, but made no reply."]

Substance of Information continued from May 2nd.

"*2nd May.*—The following information was received from Sir Thomas Reade.

"'Dr. Arnott has been with General Bonaparte since half past five o'clock this morning, and he says that he is very ill indeed, that danger is to be apprehended in the course of the day, although the probability is that he may last until to-morrow or the next day. The hiccuping is almost continual now, and he takes no sustenance whatever except water: at times he raves, but not constantly. His strength is gone.'

"6 P.M.—Within the last hour I think he is better. He has had some good sleep and is now very quiet. He has had little or no hiccup since six p.m.

"*3rd May.*—Sir T. Reade wrote from Longwood as follows: 'General Bonaparte passed a very quiet night from ten o'clock until three, at which time he was again seized with hiccup, and he became more insensible than he has yet been. The hiccup continues as well as the

delirium. In consequence of his having rested so well from ten o'clock until three, Dr. Arnott does not think him worse than he was when he left him at ten. His pulse is less frequent. Dr. Arnott is very much displeased at Dr. Antommarchi's having opposed giving him a lavament, and he is in consequence going to speak very seriously to Count Bertrand and Count Montholon about it.'

"Upon reading in the above note what is said respecting Dr. Antommarchi having opposed Dr. Arnott's opinion, the Governor proceeded to Longwood and had a conversation with Count Montholon. Dr. Arnott had endeavoured to prevail upon Professor Antommarchi to give some calomel to General Bonaparte, to which the Professor would not consent. Almost immediately after the Governor's conversation with Count Montholon, the Professor requested that Drs. Shortt and Mitchell should be sent for to Longwood, that he might have an opportunity of consulting with them. They joined with Dr. Arnott in recommending that the calomel should be administered, but Professor Antommarchi still opposed it. The point was therefore referred to Count Montholon, who joining in opinion with the three English physicians, the medicine was in consequence administered.

"*4th May.*—The following note was received from Sir T. Reade:

"'I was at Longwood from twelve to one in the night. The calomel had the desired effect. . . . I desired Dr. Arnott to let me know this morning how matters were, and I have this instant received the enclosed note from him which is the most favourable for the last week.'

"Note to Sir T. Reade:—'Things do not look worse here; if anything they are somewhat better: he has passed a tolerable night: but he is very weak still. However, upon the whole, I have more hope this morning than I have had the last two days. Communicate

this to the Governor. The hiccup continues (May 4th, 1821).'

"During the whole of this day, Drs. Shortt and Mitchell were in attendance, and the Governor made various efforts, united with them, to procure an opportunity of their seeing General Bonaparte, but in vain; Count Montholon, though disposed to give every assistance in his power, being apprehensive of the effect which the appearance of strangers in the room might create upon a person in General Bonaparte's then very debilitated state.

"At nine o'clock this night Dr. Arnott made the following communication from Longwood: 'I have just left our patient fast asleep. He appears better than he was two hours ago. He has no hiccup: his respiration is easy, and in the course of the day he has taken a considerable quantity of nourishment for a person in his state.'

"This was the last favourable information received.

"*5th May*, 7 A.M.—A signal announced to the Governor that General Bonaparte was in immediate danger. He had been speaking a few words to Count Montholon a short time before, but they were the last, it is believed, that he uttered.

"On the road to Longwood, about eight o'clock a.m., the Governor received the following communication: 'He is dying. Montholon prays I will not leave the bedside: he wishes I should see him breathe his last.'

"No material aggravation of the symptoms, however, took place until past three p.m., when the following note in pencil was handed out from Dr. Arnott: 'The pulse cannot be felt at the wrist now, and the heat is departing from the surface: but he may hold out some hours yet.'

"At a quarter past five o'clock, Dr. Arnott again wrote: 'He is worse; the respiration is become more hurried and difficult.'

"And at a few minutes before six o'clock, just at

the time the sun was setting, the following line was received: 'He has this moment expired.'"

Unfortunately, there is no evidence that bears directly on the interesting question whether extreme unction actually was administered. Montholon affirms that it was, but he gives no precise details. Another report of Arnott (referred to by Forsyth) states that at 5.30 a.m. of May 5th the patient became practically unconscious. "The under jaw dropped, the eyes became fixed; the pulse, small and weak, varied from 102 to 110 in the minute. In short, everything denoted that dissolution was fast approaching. In this state he lingered until forty-nine minutes past five o'clock, when he expired." If, then, the last sacraments were administered, the recipient was practically unconscious; and it is, at least, curious that Arnott makes no reference to the circumstance. He mentions the very remarkable fact that the body, far from showing any signs of emaciation, was very fat, in spite of the long drain on vitality.

Finally, as rumours were persistently spread about in France, even by Bertrand and Montholon, that death was due to or was accelerated by the climate of St. Helena and by our treatment of him there, we may quote the conclusive evidence to the contrary supplied by Montholon's letter to his countess, who was then in Europe. It is in "St. Helena Records," No. 32.

"Longwood, 6 mai, 1821.

"Tout est fini, ma bonne Albine: l'Empereur a rendu le dernier soupir hier soir, à 6^{h}, moins dix minutes. Son agonie a duré 12 heures; elle a été affreuse en apparence, mais rien ne peut exprimer le calme et la

résignation avec laquelle il a supporté des douleurs déchirantes. L'ouverture de son Corps a eu lieu ce matin; elle a prouvé qu'il étoit mort de la même maladie que son père, un squirre ulcéreux à l'estomac près le pylore: les $\frac{7}{8}$ de la face de l'estomac étoient ulcérées: il est probable que depuis 4 à 5 ans l'ulcère avoit commencé: c'est dans notre malheur une grande consolation pour nous que d'avoir acquis la preuve que sa mort n'est, et n'a pu être, en aucune manière le résultat de sa captivité ni de la privation de tous les soins que peut-être l'Europe eût pu offrir à l'espérance. On travaille avec activité à tous les préparatifs pour son inhumation . . .

(Signed) "MONTHOLON."

He then refers to the lying-in-state and his own hope of departure. Nothing is said as to extreme unction having been administered.

POSTSCRIPT I

The following extract from a work, entitled "Fifty Years in Ceylon," by Major Thomas Skinner, C.M.G. (London, 1891), throws an interesting light on a later portion of Sir H. Lowe's life, that which he spent in Ceylon. It reveals his essential kindness of heart. The irresolution here referred to was very probably the result of the malignant attacks of his persecutors and the lukewarm support of the Government.

"A general impression prevailed that Sir Hudson Lowe was a surly, austere man, but never was a character more maligned; a more kind, I may say tender-hearted man I never met with. For a military com-

mander it almost amounted to a fault, for it was with extreme difficulty we could get him to notice irregularities, or to punish breaches of discipline. If I had not had the support and co-operation of his A.D.C., Oliver De Lancy, the discipline of the garrison would soon have fallen off under his command.

"He was terribly undecided, and I have often wondered how his wavering mind could have carried him so far through the service, or enabled him to perform those delicate duties which were imposed upon him. I retained until very lately a striking proof of this characteristic. He was involved in a correspondence with the Government on an important question connected with the duties of his command. On my waiting on him one morning, he desired me to sit down and write a letter from his dictation. He paced up and down a long room, the whole width of his house, and in three hours finished and corrected his composition. I read it to him, and he desired me to take it home, copy it, and bring it to him for his signature. I obeyed his orders, but was far from obtaining his signature. I had to sit down again 'to make a few verbal alterations,' and this was repeated until I had seven copies of the letter; the one to which he finally attached his signature proved to be a very slight deviation from the original draft.

"I never could understand why none of Sir Hudson Lowe's works were ever published, for he had undoubtedly several on hand, and a very large quantity of MS. ready for the press.[1] Two or three amanuenses were continually engaged by him, and many reams of foolscap paper were filled, and so arranged in his private room as to indicate that there were at least three subjects to which his attention at the time was

[1] Most of these papers are now in the British Museum. Miss Lowe has kindly allowed me to see several copies of papers, and part of the unpublished memoirs.—J. H. R.

devoted. No circumstances could have been more favourable to quiet reflection than those of his life. He was very hospitable and generous; kept an excellent table, and first-rate cellar."

POSTSCRIPT II

The question alluded to above, on page 316, as to the origin of the premature reports which pointed to the Island of St. Helena as Napoleon's place of detention, is set at rest by a letter of Lord John Russell recently published for the first time by Mr. Alger, as an Appendix to his work "Napoleon's Visitors and Prisoners" (London, Constable and Co., 1904). Russell, on visiting Napoleon at Elba, in December, 1814, found the Emperor much concerned at a statement to that effect in the newspaper, the "Courier," which had been sent to him by the British Commissioner at Elba, Sir Neil Campbell. It was mere newspaper gossip; but the fact that Campbell sent a newspaper containing such a piece of news might well lead Napoleon to exaggerate its importance and look on it as semi-official.

PART II

NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

APPENDIX I

NELSON IN THE MEDITERRANEAN, 1796, 1798

I PROPOSE to bring together here some documents which throw new light on Nelson's duties and achievements in the Mediterranean in the year 1798.

It is well, however, to give at the outset a new letter of Nelson of March 23rd, 1796, which helps to fill up a gap in his letters ("Despatches and Letters of Lord Nelson," vol. iii., pp. 139-140). Nelson was then anxiously taking all precautions in his power to prevent the projected French invasion of Italy. He had already, through Mr. Trevor, pressed on the Austrians the need of occupying the important station of Vado with its excellent roadstead; and by coasting between Toulon and Genoa, he hoped to stop supplies for the French army then stationed between Nice, Loano and Savona. At the end of February he "looked into" Toulon to watch the French naval preparations and calculate the probable date of their sailing. The following letter written to Mr. Trevor, British Minister at the Court of Turin, shows that he did this again, as seven days before, he had promised to his superior

officer, Sir John Jervis. The letter is in "F. O.," Sardinia, No. 20. It was written just four days before Bonaparte arrived at Nice to take command of the army that was to perform such wonders. A letter in the same volume from Beaulieu, the Austrian commander, to the Sardinian commander, Colli, dated Pavia, March 22nd, 1796, states that he could already have moved against the French but for the lack of necessary provisions.

"'Agamemnon,' off Genoa,
March 23rd, 1796.

"DEAR SIR,

"On Saturday morning I looked into Toulon as I informed you in my last was my intention: the 13 sail which were ready for sea when I looked at them in February, were employed in bending sails, and I saw the 'Sansculottes' [*sic*] bend her topsails. The ships in the Arsenal are getting very forward, two in the Grand Arsenal have all an end, and two in the Inner Arsenal are not so forward, if we suppose that one or two may *not* be intended to come to sea, they will have 15 sail of the line and seven Frigates. If I may judge, they will be perfectly ready in about 12 or 14 days at farthest. I despatched a Frigate to Sir John Jervis with my observations, therefore he will be on his guard.

(Signed) "HORATIO NELSON.

"Mr. Trevor."

We now turn to the events of 1798. It is not, I believe, generally known that the resolve of the British Government to send a strong fleet into the Mediterranean, whence it had been entirely withdrawn in November, 1796, arose out of the general diplomatic situation and the desire to protect the kingdom of Naples from the French Republic. In order to understand the conduct of the British Government and the movements of Nelson in the Mediterranean, it is desirable to take a brief glance at the state of the Continent in the spring of the year 1798. Austria had

made peace with France by the Treaty of Campo Formio (October 17th, 1797); but the exorbitant claims of the French envoys at the Congress of Rastatt, and the occupation of Rome and Switzerland in the months of February-April, 1798, aroused the utmost alarm at the Court of Vienna. Francis II. had married a daughter of Ferdinand IV. and Caroline of Naples, and was nephew of the latter. Personal as well as political motives, therefore, prompted him to protect that kingdom from the triumphant republicans on its borders. Negotiations were on foot for framing a defensive Austro-Neapolitan alliance; and the British Ministry though as yet unaware of this, saw that the danger threatening Naples would probably induce Austria to join a new coalition against France. Of late, however, the relations between Great Britain and Austria had been very cool, partly owing to a dispute about a war loan, but also because the Court of Vienna asserted the withdrawal of the British fleet from the Mediterranean to have been a breach of the former Anglo-Austrian alliance and a cause of their disasters at the hand of Bonaparte. These complaints were forcibly urged by Thugut, the Austrian Chancellor, to the Hapsburg ambassador in London in a despatch of March 17th, 1798.

On the matter of the loan the British Ministry was inflexible, but it decided on, or shortly before, April 20th, 1798, to send a strong fleet into the Mediterranean. In three important despatches signed by Lord Grenville, our Foreign Minister on that date, for Sir Moreton Eden, British ambassador in Vienna, a promise was made that a strong British fleet would be sent into the Mediterranean ("F.O.," Austria, vol. 51, Nos. 8-10). Doubtless the fact that naval preparations were going on apace at Toulon weighed with Ministers; but in these despatches stress was laid only on the need of forming a new league for the defence of European interests in Italy and Germany. Prussia

and Russia should be induced to join it, with a view to taking action on the Rhine, while Austria would use her chief force in Italy. Great Britain's quota, it was specifically asserted, must be in the Mediterranean fleet and in subsidies to her allies. At that time, then, the British Government apparently had no fears respecting Egypt and India. Its chief concern was for Naples. On May 7th Eden reported a statement of Francis II. that he could not march an army into Italy in support of Naples until the British fleet arrived, but that he would now insist on the French withdrawing from the Roman State, and "ceasing to molest the Kingdom of Naples." Thus, both at London and at Vienna, the sending of a British fleet was looked on as the *sine quâ non* of a new Coalition against France.

This accounts for the solemn tone of the Admiralty letter to Lord St. Vincent, then commanding the British fleet off Cadiz, ordering him to despatch a powerful force into the Mediterranean as "a condition on which the fate of Europe may at this moment be stated to depend."[1] This consideration, as well as the orders of St. Vincent, explain why Nelson, after nearly destroying Bonaparte's fleet at Aboukir, returned to the Italian coast in order to fulfil the wider aims which the British Government always had in view. Austria had not yet declared herself. Naples was to be used as the fulcrum whence she could be moved from her annoying inactivity.

A despatch, also dated Downing Street, April 20th, to Sir William Hamilton ("F.O." Sicily, No. 11), states that the purpose of sending Nelson's fleet into the Mediterranean was the defence of Naples. Only the two following sentences need be quoted here:

". . . It would have been impossible for His Majesty to witness the plain and undisguised declaration of the French

[1] Quoted by Captain Mahan, "Life of Nelson," vol. i., p. 321.

Government of their intention to overwhelm the dominions of His Sicilian Majesty without feeling the most lively desire to interfere so far as he might have the means and opportunity, to rescue from destruction a Power with whom he has always been anxious to maintain the most friendly intercourse. . . His Majesty has come to the determination of sending a Fleet into the Mediterranean for the protection of Naples so soon as it is possible for it to be brought forward without detriment to the indispensable objects of His Majesty's naval service or imminent hazard to the safety of his dominions."

The same fact appears in the letter of Lord St. Vincent to Sir William Hamilton, British ambassador at Naples.

The fact that the first object of the British Government was the protection of Naples, appears in the following letter of Lord St. Vincent to Sir William Hamilton, British ambassador at Naples ("F. O." Austria, No. 51):

"'Ville de Paris,' before Cadix [*sic*].
"May 22 [1798].

"I am this instant honoured with Your Excellency's letter of the —— April. I conclude the 'Privateer' has had a long passage, as the 'Transfer,' sloop of war, by which this is conveyed, has only been 24 hrs. from Gibraltar.

"Without entering into the wretched policy which has placed the two Sicilies in the station they are, with respect to the devast[at]ing System of this insolent overbearing Republick, I have a powerful Squadron ready to fly to the assistance of Naples the moment I receive a reinforcement from the south-west coast of Ireland which is on its passage hither, and I hourly look for its appearance with the utmost degree of anxiety and impatience. Rear-Admiral Sir Horatio Nelson will command this force, which is composed of the *élite* of the navy of England. Sir George Byng (Lord Torrington) did not make a better choice when he was charged by George the 1st with a very important mission to the same coasts; and I have no doubt of the event being equally propitious to His

Majesty's arms. I am prohibited by my Orders from quitting this position which the mistaken policy of Spain has made necessary.

"Have the goodness to lay me at the feet of their Majesties and assure them of my most profound Respect, and that I will exert every nerve for the preservation of their august Persons and Dominions. Say everything friendly to General Acton for me, and be assured I am, &c.

(Signed) "ST. VINCENT."

Later advices from the British Admiralty pointed to Naples, or Egypt, or Spain as the probable destination of Bonaparte's armada.[1] But the despatches above quoted leave no doubt as to the reasons that first dictated the despatch of Nelson's squadron into the Mediterranean. The bold forward policy adopted by the British Government led to results of world-wide importance, but that policy at first was strictly and solely European.

The next topic on which the British records throw new light is that relating to the terribly long delay of the three frigates, which had been separated by a storm from Nelson's fleet, in rejoining the flag. The miscalculation which led Captain Hope, the senior officer on the three frigates—"Alcmene," "Emerald," and "Bonne Citoyenne"—to return to Gibraltar, while Nelson was sailing towards the East, has been commented on by Captain Mahan (vol. i., p. 326). But, as far as I know, the doings of the frigates in the interval have never yet been made clear. In "F.O." Sicily, No. 11, there is a letter of Captain Hope to Sir W. Hamilton, dated Messina, July 31st, which explains the later misadventures of the three unlucky frigates. He states that on his first arrival at Messina from Naples, he found the French "gone aloft," with Nelson in pursuit, and that thereafter, while sailing to the Levant, he gained information that the French had been seen to

[1] James, "Naval History," vol. ii., p. 221.

the south of Candia (Crete), "steering to the S.E., supposed for Alexandria." He (Hope) had therefore immediately steered in that direction. He continues:

". . . When we had got about half way we spoke to a vessel who said she had been examined by our squadron to the Westward of Candia on their return this way. We immediately made the best of our way here, and I now find the Admiral left Syracusa 6 days ago; and, what is very odd, has left us no orders how to proceed; I however mean to compleat our water and try once more what we can do. If I do not fall in with the squadron I mean to return this way to Naples where we trust you will be able to supply our wants, as by that time we shall not have a bit of salt provisions left.

. . . . . .

(Signed) "GEORGE HOPE."

It is well known that Nelson deeply lamented the lack of frigates. In a P.S. to his despatch to Hamilton, penned at Syracuse on July 23rd, he wrote: "*No Frigates!* to which has been, and may again be, attributed the loss of the French fleet." At that time Hope was beating back towards Messina and must narrowly have missed Nelson, who sailed from Syracuse on July 25th. It seems strange that Hope did not receive the instructions penned by Nelson at Syracuse on July 22nd, for "the Commanders of any of H. M.'s Ships," directing them to follow him to Cyprus and Syria.[1] Some untoward accident delayed its communication to Hope. Even more unfortunate was the failure of Nelson to sight his frigates, somewhere about the 27th or 28th July, between Sicily and Crete—a mishap which deprived him of their services at the Battle of the Nile, and enabled Villeneuve to escape with the four ships that survived the British attack.

It may be well to add here a letter of General Acton, Chief Minister of the King of Naples, to Sir

[1] "Despatches of Lord Nelson," vol. iii., p. 46.

W. Hamilton, on August 1st, 1798 (the very day of Nelson's victory), which shows the state of doubt and anxiety of the Neapolitan Court at that time, when the destination of Bonaparte's armada and the conduct of Austria were alike uncertain. It is in reply to Nelson's despatch, written at Syracuse on July 22nd, complaining of the lack of official deference shown to him by the Neapolitan authorities. Part only of this letter has been quoted by Captain Mahan.[1] The spelling and composition show that Acton had partly forgotten his mother tongue.

TO SIR W. HAMILTON.

"1st of August 1798.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"I have seen with a true concern the contents of Admiral Nelson's letters from Siracusa; I must condole with all of us for the misfortune which has befallen the activity of our brave Admiral by miscarring [*sic*] the French in their Course, notwithstanding the most Energical efforts to meet them before landing an army, Lord knows in what direction, or what is their mischievous project!

"We must however do as well as we can in this disagreable but not desperate case. His Sicilian Majesty has been acquainted immediately of what you have been so good as to communicate to me: both Their Majesties are in the greatest uneasiness for their own Situation in this Moment. Admiral Nelson is certainly at present, and every English squadron, most heartily welcome to all the Ports of the Two Sicilies; but you are officially acquainted only since yesterday, my dear Sir, from Sir Morton Eden, as well as from our own communication, that the long wished for articles of our breaking Peace on account of the English coming into our Ports is to be consider'd in the *casu foederis* by the Emperor. That article was signed at Vienna the 16th of July only: Therefore all orders in Sicily for admitting any English Squadron of whatever number could not openly be given, and our

[1] "Life of Nelson," vol. i., p. 342.

demands for the respective governors are but an Excuse to give in case of a Rupture to shew that we are in a kind forced to admit them above the fixed number in case the Emperor had lain on us the blame and denied to support us, as the Treaty offer'd us did formally declare that in case only of *an attack*, not provoked, from the French, as Invasion, &c., we shou'd be defended by the Austrians.

"I hope, my dear Sir, that having seen all our papers from Vienna arrived yesterday you will be so kind as to do us justice with the Court of St. James's, with the Earl of St. Vincent and with the good and sensible Sir Horatio Nelson especially. I enjoy, however, that every civility was paid to him in Siracusa. We are since yesterday on another footing; but we are now in danger of a war directly on Admiral Nelson's account. You see fairly our position. Will Admiral Nelson run to the Levant again without knowing for certain the position of the French and leave the Two Sicilies exposed in these Moments? Buonaparte has absconded himself, but in any part he has taken security not to be forced. God knows where he is and whether we shall not see him again in a few days if we do not hear of what a Course he has taken. I present all this to your consideration. The brave Nelson will certainly have them present, he may defeat the French coming to us, he expected and we hoped on their passing on our Coasts.

"I am &c.,
"T. ACTON."

The British Government did not hear of the Battle of the Nile until October 2nd. Foreseeing, perhaps, that the Neapolitan Court would do something rash, Lord Grenville sent off a despatch the next day to Hamilton, urging caution, in view of the proximity of the French forces, and the continued hesitation of the Hapsburgs.

"In this situation" (ran the despatch) "it appeared that the decision, both in point of substance and of time, must be left to His Sicilian Majesty's own determination, and that the most friendly Conduct which His [Britannic] Majesty could pursue on this subject was to refer the negotiation to Naples

and thus to leave it to H. S. M. to act in this respect as circumstances may require and particularly as may be found most expedient from a view of the final resolutions (whatever they may be) of the Court of Vienna."

A further despatch of the same date thanked the Neapolitan Government for its offers respecting the future of Malta, but stated that "His Majesty does not entertain any idea of acquiring the sovereignty of Malta, or of any of the Venetian Islands."—It would be better to restore the Order of St. John.

Nevertheless, the final resolve of the Court of Naples was framed, and in a strangely irregular way. Nelson must bear a large share of responsibility for the premature outbreak of war, as will be seen by the following despatch from Hamilton to Lord Grenville. It has not been published in the Nelson despatches, or by Captain Mahan or Mr. Jeaffreson. The remarkable phrase "we all agreed" clearly included Nelson. Hamilton's disregard of the warning conveyed in Grenville's despatch of October 3rd, would alone have sufficed to bring about his disgrace.

No. 35.

"NAPLES Nov 19. 1798.

"MY LORD

"On the 12th instant Sir Horatio Nelson and I went by the invitation of Their Sicilian Majesties to the camp of St. Germano on the confines of Abruzzo [*sic*] and were present at a military manoeuvre of thirty two thousand men, cavalry and infantry, under the command of Genl. Mack—a finer army was never seen, and the General told Lord Nelson (for by the late Gazettes we are informed that the King has been graciously pleased to distinguish that brave admiral by the high dignity of a Peer of Great Britain) that he had never in all his experience seen so fine a body of men. They went through their different evolutions incomparably well. In the evening we had a consultation with Generals Mack and Acton in which we all agreed that the boldest measures were the

safest. The uncertainty of the Emperor's support seemed to be the only drawback; however, when we came away, it seemed to be finally determined that the army should march on in a few days, and, by a letter received yesterday from Genl. Acton, His Excellency assures me it will march in seven columns on Thursday next the 23rd instant."

"Lord Nelson, in our conversations, always expressed a desire of aiding General Mack in his land operations with a co-operation by sea of the powerful squadron under his command, now in the Bay of Naples, consisting of the 'Vanguard,' 'Culloden,' 'Minotaur,' the four Portugheze [*sic*] ships-of-the-line; the 'Terpsichore' and 'Alliance' frigates, and 'Flora,' cutter, besides the 'Benjamin,' a Portugheze brig. General Mack, having expressed his fears for Tuscany, and the Grand Duke having written confidentially to their Sicilian Majesties to assist him in his present distress, Lord Nelson proposed the sending a body of Neapolitan troops to take immediate possession of Leghorn, and, to put an end to all difficulties, offered to transport on board his squadron five thousand infantry to Leghorn, provided that the King of Naples would write to the Grand Duke of Tuscany to allow of their entering Leghorn. The Admiral's proposal was eagerly accepted, and Captain Gage was dispatched yesterday in the 'Terpsichore' to carry the King of Naples' letter to the Duke of Tuscany. The five thousand Neapolitan troops are now embarking on board Lord Nelson's squadron, and his Lordship proposes to sail to-morrow if possible, for Leghorn, and we flatter ourselves all will succeed if the Grand Duke should but be firm. It seems to be the glorious lot of Great Britain to save them all in spite of what they have hitherto been doing to ruin their own affairs, and lose their Dominions.

"Another fine Neapolitan army of thirty thousand men will remain in this kingdom, after the army above mentioned has marched forward into the Roman State.

"Whilst Lord Nelson and I were with their Sicilian Majesties at St. Germano, the Neapolitan messenger from London arrived there and brought me your Lordship's despatches of the 3rd of October (Nos. 6 and 7), with the full Power the King has been most graciously pleased to honour me with. All I can do at present is to return your Lordship my grateful thanks for the confidence reposed in me, and to assure

you that I shall strictly adhere to the letter of the Instructions your Lordship has been pleased to give me.

"All that Lord Nelson requested from this Government on his return from Malta for the more close blockade of that Port, and for the enabling the Maltese insurgents to reduce the fortress of the Valette, has been granted. Two Neapolitan Frigates and a Corvette have been put under the command of Lord Nelson, and his Lordship sends them tomorrow to Malta, where they are to remain under the command of Captain Ball of H.M. 'Alexander,' who has been appointed by Lord Nelson to command the blockade of Malta. These frigates have on board mortars, great guns, 2,000 stand of arms and ammunition of all sorts, according to the wish of the Maltese insurgents, and I hope to inform your Lordship soon of that important fortress being reduced."

[He then states that news had arrived that the Russo-Turkish fleet had reduced Zante, Kephalonia, etc., and that the French garrison of Corfu, 1,000 strong, had been driven into the citadel by the inhabitants. Also that the Brest squadron had been mostly captured or destroyed in the Bay of Killala. He adds "God send that it may be true."]

"The fate of this country seems now to be near its crisis, and when I can with certainty assure your Lordship that the army has really advanced, I shall entertain the greatest hope that the evident wicked Intentions of the French Republic against this country may be entirely disappointed.

"Every day proves more and more the great importance of the glorious success that attended His Majesty's arms in Egypt on the first of August.

"I have, etc.,

(Signed) "W^M HAMILTON."

There is no need to illustrate this subject further. The fate of the Parthenopean Republic and the action of Nelson at Naples in the summer of 1799, have recently been detailed, in a more accurate and authentic way than ever before, in a volume of the Navy Records Society, edited by Mr. H. C. Gutteridge.

APPENDIX II

PREPARATIONS FOR THE DEFENCE OF ACRE

THE following despatches respecting the preparations for the defence of Acre are taken from the British Admiralty Records, "Mediterranean," No. 19. They show how precarious was the state of that town before the arrival of H.M.S. "Theseus," "Tigre," etc. I believe that these despatches have not been published before, though I quoted a small part of Captain Miller's "Report" in my "Life of Napoleon" (vol. i., p. 206). The letter of Luigi Malagamba, secretary to Gezzar Pacha, was evidently the means of warning Sir Sidney Smith as to the dangerous state of affairs at Acre.

On March 18th, 1799, Sir Sidney Smith sent off to the British Admiralty a despatch dated H.M.S. "Tigre," Acre Bay, stating that he is succouring

"Gezzer Ahmed, Pacha, Governor of Syria, besieged in his capital by Gen. Buonaparte, who has quitted Egypt at the head of a great portion, if not the whole of, his army for that purpose: his intention was manifested by his approaches and written threats time enough for me to be before hand with him so far as to arrive here first, and I hope at least to be able to retard his success in this quarter and occupy him till the arrival of a force sufficient to give a more effectual check to his further progress than we can expect to do with what is immediately hereabouts; their Lordships may be assured that I will do my utmost."

"The enclosed are explanatory of the present situation of affairs in this quarter. No. 1 is the first news I received of the actual march of the French into Syria: No. 2 Captain

Miller's report: No. 3 Buonaparte's letter to Gezzer Pacha: No. 4 the news of the nearest approach of the enemy who have not proceeded further than their first position in the valley to the east of Mount Carmel.[1]

No. 1.

"MONSIEUR LE COMMANDANT,

"D'ordre de son Excellence Gezzer Pacha, J'ai l'honneur de vous écrire la présente qui vous sera rendu par Mahomet Bey, capitaine du petit brigantin du dit Gouverneur.

"Puisque par M. le capitaine Foote vous avez, monsieur, eu la Bonté d'envoyer l'avis de l'invasion que les françois devoient faire en Syrie, vous n'ignorez pas le dessein de nos communs ennemis: je dois à présent vous dire que les jours passés après s'être emparés de *Lariss*,[2] château entre les frontières de l'Egypte et de la Syrie, que les troupes de Gezzer n'ont presque rien défendu, sont aussi entrés à Gaza, que les mêmes troupes ont abandonné; aujourd'hui les soldats de Gezzer au nombre de trieze à 15,000 sont une portion à Jaffa, une autre à Banu et à Lidda, villages peu éloignés de Jaffa. Mais dans ces soldats règne le plus grand désordre et crainte des françois de façon qu'à chaque instant nous nous attendons à quelqu'autre revers et même à être renfermés à Acre, qui tiendra bien peu si les troupes n'ont pas plus de courage; en outre de tout ce que je viens de vous dire il y a presque tous les habitans des environs qui n'attendent que les français, surtout ceux du Mont Liban, qui sont absolument déclarés pour les français: voilà M. le Commandant l'Etat véridique où ces contrées sont réduites, et peut-être qu'a l'arrivée chez vous de la présente nous serons encore plus mal.

"Dans ces tristes circonstances le Pacha n'a d'autre recours qu'à votre amitié; c'est le tems, monsieur de l'aider et de remplir les promesses que tant de fois M. votre prédécesseur et dans votre dernière lettre [vous] lui avez fait ainsi; et me charge de vous dire qu'il vous prie instamment de vouloir

[1] No. 3 need not be printed here, as it has been published in the "Correspondance de Napoléon," vol. iv. No. 4 is also of no great interest.

[2] El Arisch.

bien expédier tout de suite deux vaisseaux si vous le pouvez, pour rester à Caiffa et l'aider en cas de besoin, et s'il est possible de faire croiser de Damietta à Gaza pour empêcher que les français ne portent les vivres par mer à l'armée, étant assuré que c'est par ce course qu'ils vont passer leurs provisions. Si, puis, vous ne pouvez pas expédier deux vaisseaux, il en attend un sans faute et avec la plus grande Diligence; ici vous trouverez de toutes les provisions que vous en aurez besoin, et s'il ne vous envoye rien par la présente occasion c'est parcequ'il ne veut pas que personne sache où il expédie ce Bâtiment: tout ce que j'ai l'honneur de vous dire c'est d'ordre du Pacha. J'espère, Monsieur, que votre générosité n'abandonnera jamais un ami et allié comme lui qui feroit de tout pour votre service sans vous dire des autres raisons qui peuvent vous engager à venir.

"Quant à la peste depuis quelques jours elle a diminué et aujourd'hui il y a peu de chose.

"Je suis, etc.
(Signed) "LUIGI MALAGAMBA.

"Acre, 1 Mars, 1799.

P.S. "Dans l'instant on apporte la nouvelle que Jaffa est pris, mais il faut attendre d'en être assuré."

A second P.S. adds:

"Ce ne fut pas vraie encore alors, mais les français y sont entrés le 7 Mars six de front par une brêche bien défendu et ont eu de la peine à vaincre la résistance que fit chaque maison après être entrés d'apres le rapport d'un prisonnier français."

Note by W. S[idney] Smith, 18 March, '99.

"This letter reached me off Alexandria the 9 inst.: and I lost no time in detaching the 'Theseus' to the support of our ally, remaining behind only so long as was necessary to give Captain Dixon of the 'Lion' his orders for the blockade in my absence and station the 'Tigre' prize and Gun boat with Mr. Boxer to prevent the Jermes[1] from carrying arms

[1] Djermes, *i.e.* Nile feluccas

and ammunition along shore to the eastward. I arrived here the 15th, and found Capt. Miller of the 'Theseus' had given the Pasha all necessary advice towards putting the Town in a state of defence, some progress in clearing away rubbish being already made. I have visited all the posts and consider the town as defensible, but indiscipline and disaffection are too evident."

Sir Sidney Smith encloses No. 2, the Report from Captain Miller, dated off Acre, March 14th, 1799.

"All the people of the Country, except of Nabolos,[1] particularly the Druses favour the French: the latter are ready to join them with 15,000 men when they put foot in their country. Acre, miserable as it is, is far the strongest Town in the country, and there is nothing to check the enemy between it and Aleppo; not a single soldier has yet arrived to Djezzar's assistance from the other provinces of Turkey, but he is in hourly expectation of 3,000 Albanians.[2] He told me himself he could not write any answer to Buonaparte but had sent off a man with a verbal one only, wishing obliquely to convey to me that it was a defiance, but I very much fear it is to buy his peace.[3]

"I hope the event will prove this suspicion unjust. I requested to see the Fortifications and was attended round those towards the land by some of his principal people to whom I pointed out the defects they could remedy. I found almost every embrasure empty except those towards the sea. Many years' collection of the dirt of the town thrown in such a situation as completely covered the approach to the gate from the only Guns that could flank it and from the sea. The flat land on which the town stands, and which, with the unfortunate exception of one green hill about half-a-mile distant, extends several miles in every inland direction, is near the town full of old ruined walls and deep hollows fit to cover an enemy from the fire of the Town as well as that of the ship

[1] Nabloûs.
[2] Sir S. Smith adds, "2,000 arrived the 17th."
[3] Sir S. Smith adds that that idea may have entered his mind but is not adopted.

and gunboats; and none of their batteries have casemates, traverses, or splinter proofs: they have many guns but generally small and a number variously defective, the carriages in general so.

"I have been sounding this morning to find an anchorage from whence the 'Torride' might scour the back of the Green Hill but have only succeeded in part. I have placed her where she commands the approach round the Bay and can scour two sides and the summit of the Green Hill.

"I offered the Pacha to man and wholly undertake the defence of a small castle standing on a rock about 200 yards from the Town Mole, and 400 from the beach enfilading and flanking the road to the Town and the Beach."[1]

[1] Captain Miller of the "Theseus" perished in the terrible explosion on that ship during the defence of Acre. A monument was erected to his memory in St. Paul's Cathedral.

APPENDIX III

THE ASSASSINATION OF THE CZAR PAUL

THIS mysterious event has always aroused so profound an interest that it has been thought desirable to print here the hitherto unpublished official report on that subject forwarded to the British Foreign Office by our ambassador at St. Petersburg, Lord St. Helens. It is in "F.O.," Russia, No. 48. Limits of space render it impossible to discuss the many complex questions connected with that occurrence. They have recently been examined in a thorough manner by R. R. in his work "Kaiser Paul's Ende" (Stuttgart, 1897), and by T. Schiemann in "Die Ermordung Pauls" (Berlin, 1902).

"My Lord,

"It has been impossible for me during the short time that I have been here to obtain exact information as to the immediate motives and objects of the conspiracy against the life of the late Emperor; but I have reason to believe that the particulars of the transaction itself are nearly as follow.

"Though there is no doubt that the planners of the conspiracy were Prince Zoubow and his brother, with some other individuals of high rank attached to their party, it appears that the person on whom they principally relied for the success of their enterprise was General Benigsen [*sic*] a foreign officer (of Hanoverian extraction) who after having been highly favoured and distinguished in the former reign, had been stripped of his rank and fortune, and otherwise ill treated by the late Emperor. This officer in the night of the 23rd of March, at the head of a number of persons engaged

in the plot, approached the new palace of St. Michael, under the show of a relief from the Palace guard. They passed the drawbridge and the first centinels (*sic*) without interruption, but some alarm spreading from their arriving at so unusual an hour, it reached a private Hussar, who usually slept in the Emperor's ante-chamber. This man had time to make himself heard through the door, which was, however, immediately burst open by the assailants, who found the Emperor attempting to make his escape through a private door which led to the Empress's apartments; but which was instantly secured by General Benigsen, who cried out, 'Sire vous êtes arrêté:' the Emperor then lost all presence of mind, and while he was endeavouring to vent some unintelligible efforts of reproach, he was struck to the ground by some of the inferior Conspirators, who afterwards strangled Him with His Sash. It is added that when a surgeon who lived in the palace examined the body and declared that he was not absolutely without some chance of recovery, some further and more violent means were immediately used to render it impossible.

"Tho' the event in itself occasioned a general sensation of joy, both in the Capital and throughout the Empire, it appears that if the object of the Zoubow family was to acquire a large share of power under the new reign, that design has been entirely defeated, as they are looked upon with an eye of mistrust by the present Emperor, and are become universally unpopular, even with the soldiery. Count von der Pahlen, however, tho' there is no doubt of his having been likewise very deeply concerned in the plot, still maintains his ground, and indeed his uncommon energy of character and military talents must no doubt render him a most useful servant to the young Emperor during the ferment which the late events have naturally produced in this Capital, and which is not likely soon to be allayed.

"I have the honour to be, etc.,

(Signed) "ST. HELENS."

APPENDIX IV

THE BEGINNING OF THE THIRD COALITION

THE question has often been discussed, which Power, Great Britain or Russia, made the first overtures with a view to common action against France, after the rupture of the Peace of Amiens. It has generally been assumed, especially by French writers, that the British Cabinet, that of Addington, at once began to seek to draw the other Great Powers into a new coalition against France. Possibly this may have been done by indirect or semi-official means; but, as far as I have been able to see, the archives of the British Foreign Office contain no papers proving that Ministers gave any instructions of this nature to the British ambassadors at St. Petersburg, Vienna and Berlin. At that time there was a certain amount of friction with those Governments, and the Addington Cabinet seems to have limited its aims to restoring cordial relations with them, especially with that of Russia. Much could be said in favour of a waiting policy. The impetuosity and pertinacity of Bonaparte's nature made it fairly certain that his policy would soon conflict with that of the other Continental Powers.

This proved to be the case. Already, in the early part of the year 1803, the Czar, Alexander I., had been disgusted by the lack of consideration for his wishes displayed during the settlement of Germany, which had proceeded, nominally at least, under the joint mediation of France and Russia. In the autumn came the news that the French were seeking to stir

up strife in Albania and the Morea, districts in which Alexander felt a keen interest. The result of it all was that he ordered the following overture to be made to the British Government with a view to common action in those parts.

It should be observed here that this important despatch, which may almost be said to foreshadow the Anglo-Russian alliance of April 11th, 1805, was drawn up at St. Petersburg at the time when the timid and lethargic Woronzow (the elder) was virtually giving up the control of the Russian Foreign Office to the ambitious young Polish Prince, Czartoryski. His "Memoirs" (vol. ii., chaps. i.-iii.) show what were the aims that he set before the statesmen of Russia. First of all was the desire for a close understanding with Great Britain, which he sought to bring about by the following interesting communication.

I may add that the later despatches describing the formation of the Third Coalition have been collected and edited by me for publication by the Royal Historical Society in their "Transactions," 1904.

F. O. Russia, 54:

"Traduction d'une Lettre du Chancelier de l'Empire au Comte de Woronzow.

"St. Petersbourg: ce 20, Novembre [O.S.] 1803.

"MONSIEUR LE COMTE,

"Des informations qui nous viennent de differens côtés nous ont convaincus de l'intention du premier Consul de débarquer des troupes Françaises sur les Côtes de l'Albanie et de la Morée d'un autre côté; l'expérience réitérée du passé nous apprend ce que nous aurons à attendre, si les François réussissent de mettre un pied ferme dans ces Contrées: sans entrer dans les détails d'une énumeration des suites désagréables, qui pourroient résulter du succés de ces desseins despotiques du Gouvernement François, non seulement pour la Porte Elle-même, mais même pour les autres Puissances de l'Europe, qui ont quelque intérêt dans la con-

servation de l'intégrité des Domaines de l'Empire Ottoman, je ne puis pas passer sous silence, que les François, une fois établis dans la Morée, chercheront sûrement avec le tems d'effectuer leurs vues sur l'Egypte; et pour cet effet, entre autres moyens ils ne manqueront pas de gagner les Grecs et les Albaniens par tout ce qu'il y a de promesses flatteuses, et en sémant sur leur chemin, selon leur usage, le venin de leurs principes pervers. Qui ignore le but du Gouvernement François dans son désir opiniâtre de posséder l'Egypte, et que, fixant l'œil avide sur les florissantes Colonies Angloises dans l'Orient, il a de tout tems regardé l'Egypte comme l'entrée dans l'Inde?

"En détournant l'attention de la Cour de Londres sur ce danger, quoiqu'eloigné, mais qui se trouve dans le nombre des choses possibles, nous ne sommes mûs que du désir seul de conserver au moins dans cette partie de l'Europe le repos et la tranquillité, et d'assure l'intégrité des possessions de l'Empire Turc, notre voisin de la République des Sept-Isles-Unies qui se trouve sous notre garantie.

"Guidés par ce désir, nous ne manquerons pas de notre côté d'employer les moyens qui se trouvent entre nos mains pour opposer autant qu'il est possible une barrière aux tentatives des troupes Françoises sur l'Albanie. Dans cette vue nous regardons la République Ionienne comme la meilleure deffense des côtes qui lui sont voisines du Continent et de la Morée, *et comme un point lequel en gardant entre nos mains, il nous sera plus facile de resister aux mouvemens des troupes Francoises.*

"En communiquant avec une pleine confiance au Cabinet de S^{t} James notre manière de penser sur cet objet, nous désirons qu'il ne nous cache point également ses vues relativement à la Grèce. Il nous est nécessaire de connoître les moyens que la Cour de Londres désigne pour la conservation de ces Contrées et les liaisons qu' Elle a avec leurs habitans. Je dois observer ici combien il seroit utile que l'Amiral Nelson eût ordre de détacher quelques Frigates [*sic*] pour la Croisière dans les parages de la République Ionienne et dans la Baye de Valon, ainsi que d'entrer avec notre Plenipotentiaire à Corfou, le Comte Mocenigo, dans un arrangement secret des mesures communes pour la défense et la protection de la Grèce. Il seroit bien nécessaire en outre

que M^r^ Foresti, ou quelque autre Agent Anglois à Corfou, eût à sa disposition une certaine somme d'argent pour l'employer dans des cas urgents d'après les Conseils du Comte Mocenigo, et d'aider par là ce dernier, dans les mesures Conservatrices, qui de leur commun accord seroient reconnues utiles.

"Je ne manquerai pas de m'expliquer ici sur le sujet que je Vous communique maintenant, avec l'Ambassadeur Anglois, pour qu'il puisse en aviser à tems l'Amiral Nelson, ce qui nous gagnera quelque tems.

"L'Importance des ouvertures que V. E. est chargée de faire au Ministère Anglois et qui demandent une réponse aussi prompte que possible, m'oblige d'attendre avec impatience de vos Nouvelles sur la manière dont elles seront reçues.

[*Endorsed*] "In C^t^ Woronzow's
of 19^th^ Jan^y^
Copy sent to Sir J. Warren.
Jan^y^ 24^th^ 1804."

APPENDIX V

NAPOLEON'S PLANS FOR INVADING ENGLAND

THE Historical Section of the General Staff of the French Army has collected all the materials available in France for the study of Bonaparte's plans for the invasion of England; and the result is to be seen in the admirable work edited by Captain Desbrière: "Projets et Tentatives de Débarquement aux Iles Britanniques (1793-1804)," 3 vols., Paris. From the nature of the case the scholarly editor has not been able fully to use the British records dealing with that subject. I propose therefore to print here a few documents of general interest which he has not included in his third volume.

The first document (A) is of interest as emanating from that restless and inventive exile, General Dumouriez, who drew up so many plans for the advice of the British Government. It occurs in an undated Memoir, headed "Réflexions Générales," in the Library of the Secretary of State for War (70. I. B.). I give here the most interesting parts, dealing with the plan of the French flotilla to cross the Channel, and the means to be taken for repulsing or destroying it. It is clear from this, as from many others of our State documents, that experienced men had very little fear of the French flotilla. In my "Life of Napoleon" (vol. i., pp. 485-6), I have quoted extracts from a Report of Admiral Montague from the Downs to this effect; and the information given in the following Reports is of the same tenour. B and D are of interest as showing that many signs pointed to Ireland as the real point of attack; it certainly occupied a prominent

place in Napoleon's plan of September 29th, 1804. (On this point Captain Desbrière's work, vol. iii., pp. 317-322, 574-590, may be consulted.) C and D show that the British Government was minutely informed of all the preparations of the flotilla.

A.

Traversee du Canal.[1]

"Quant à l'espoir de faire naviguer en ordre de bataille mille à douze cent bâtiments, inégaux par leur construction, leur voilure, leur encombrement, de leur faire traverser les marées, les courants, les vents de la Manche en espèce de bataillon quarré, de manière à arriver dans le même ordre sur les côtes de l'Angleterre, c'est une absurdité qui décèle la plus grande ignorance de l'élement sur lequel doit s'exécuter cette marche tacticienne. Mais, en supposant qu'un calme profonde donnât quelque possibilité à des bâtiments à rames de cheminer pendant que des vaisseaux de guerre et des frégates resteraient dans une immobilité forcée, la flotille d'invasion n'en trouverait pas moins à combattre une ligne de bâtiments à rames près des côtes Anglaises, protegée par des blockships, des batteries de côtes, et des troupes qui au moins porteraient le désordre dans les assaillants, et comme la calme ne peut pas durer plus des trois ou quatre heures dans un canal étroit comme la Manche, constamment occupé par les vents d'Est ou d'Ouest, les vaisseaux et les frégates prendraient bien vite la queue de la flotille, la mettraient entre deux feux, et la briseraient contre la côte qu'elle aurait prétendu aborder.

"Cette seconde espèce de marine, désignée sous le nom de *Small Craft* ne peut pas être trop multipliée, on doit surtout y joindre beaucoup de brûlots pour les lancer au milieu de cette multitude de bâtiments à l'approche des Côtes. On pourrait même en calme les remorquer à portée d'arriver dans la flotille à la faveur de la Marée. Les brûlots

[1] This Memoir is undated, but probably belongs to the spring of 1804. At that time (so Captain Desbrière calculates) the French had ready for sea 1,124 vessels in the flotilla—which corresponds roughly to Dumouriez's estimate given below.

doivent servir également pour attaquer la flotille sur la rade de St. Jean, parceque les Marées Seules suffisent pour les gouverner jusqu'au contre de la rade, et cette manœuvre, même en calme forcerait la flotille, ou à gagner le large, tomber dans la ligne d'attaque, ou de rentrer dans le port, ce qui dans la confusion réussirait à très peu; les autres s'échoueraient sous les batteries. Si Lord Nelson avait été pourvu de brûlots lors de son attaque de la rade de Boulogne, il n'aurait pas manqué son expédition.[1]

"Les inconvéniens et les dangers de la traversée sont encore plus multipliés et plus imminents pour la division, de Flessingue, pour celle du Texel, et surtout pour celle de Cherbourg et de St. Malo, parceque leur traversée est beaucoup plus longue.

"Quant à l'escadre de Brest, plus elle sera considérable, plus elle trouvera d'obstacles à effectuer son passage en Irlande, qu'on peut supposer être sa destination.[2] Elle aura sans doute ordre de se battre pour donner à son convoy le tems de filer sous l'escorte de quelques frégates. L'escadre sera certainement battue. Buonaparte s'y attend sans doute et en fait le sacrifice dans l'espoir d'être dédommagé par la réussite de la descente. Mais, comme cette escadre n'occupera que les vaisseaux de ligne de l'Amiral anglais, ses frégates se mettront certainement à la poursuite du convoy, qui, s'il leur échappe, rencontrera sur les côtes d'Irlande tous les vaisseaux stationaires et la *small craft* destinée fixement à la défense de cette Isle.

"Il est donc presque démontré qu'aucune des Divisions de l'Armée d'invasion ne peut réussir à atteindre aucune partie des côtes de l'Empire Britannique, vu la bonne disposition et la constante vigilance des forces navales de toute qualité destinées à les défendre. . . ."

Nevertheless he writes some eight pages more on the supposed descent, and on coast defences that are to be desired.

[1] On October 1, 1801.

[2] Captain Desbrière shows (vol. iii., p. 508) that up to May, 1804, not one of the small vessels built at Brest and the Bay of Biscay, had been able to join those in the Channel.

B.

In War Office Records, Intelligence, vol. 425.

[Most Secret.]

"PARIS, July 5, 1803.

"On doit faire sous peu de tems deux essais de descente en Angleterre: ce seront deux fausses attaques, d'ont l'une partira des Côtes de la Belgique et l'autre de celles du Pas de Calais. Bonaparte y sera en Personne mais seulement pour la Représentation; la véritable attaque sera dirigée par Masséna sur l'Irlande.[1] Elle doit partir de Brest et des côtes de Normandie; cet avis est donné comme venant de bonne source et pouvant être regardé comme officiel. Rien de nouveau à Boulogne, si ce n'est que 50 bâteaux plats doivent arriver d'un moment à l'autre dans le Port d'Ambleteuse. C'est un fait certain."

C.

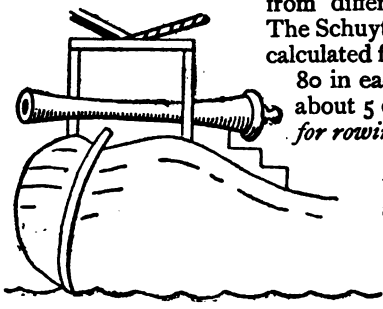
War Office Records, Intelligence, vol. 426.

"'Antelope,' Yarmouth Roads,
26 Jan^{y}. 1804.

"A Person is come to Sir Sidney Smith, who left Flushing about 12 days ago, there were then at that place the following vessels, 110 Schuyts all new carrying each One long Gun and adapted for transporting from 60 to 80 Soldiers, 17 Schooners carrying each six Prs in the Waste (*sic*), 2 long 24 Prs forward and one abaft, also a Dogger Brig of 1^{e} Guns, One French frigate of 44 Guns ('La Furie') rigged; her sails unbent on the 12th, bent again on the 21st, her men said to be distributed in the above mentioned vessels; One Dutch Frigate (the 'Aurora') just launched but not built up; All of the above in the Basin out of which the Merchantmen are sent to make room for the Flotilla. Several Gun

[1] This report, as also the details given by Captain Desbrière on pp. 317-322, and 375, seem to show that there was a plan of supporting Emmett's attempted rising in Dublin on July 23, 1803. Or, perhaps, the encouragement given by the French authorities tempted him to that foolish enterprise.

Schooners on the stocks just framed may be ready in about three weeks, about 6,000 men on the Island of Walcheren; 150 more Schuyts said to be coming from different parts of Holland. The Schuyts (*Gun Boats*) are also calculated for carrying Troops 60 to 80 in each besides their crew of about 5 or 6 seamen, *not adapted for rowing*. They carry one long 18 or 12 P^r^ pointed forward under a Gallows across the stem over which the Bowsprit and stay are secured—they are Sloop rigged with a very short Gaff not extending beyond the taff-



rail, built upon the Plan of a Schweling fishing Boat but rather wider and deeper and of carved work—draw about 3 or 4 feet water, work with lee boards; The Troops sleep below on two inclined Platforms (as in a Guard Room) which extend the whole length of the vessel except a place for the Officers (under which they store their arms and Provisions). General Monnet exercises the Troops every day in about 50 of these Gun Boats at a time in embarking and disembarking in the Basin. These Boats have been out in the roads and seem to work tolerably well in smooth water, but the informant does not think they would in a Sea. They seem however very well calculated for running thro' a surf. The Growler Gun-vessel lately English lyes at the Rammekers and one large armed Galliot before Kampvier.

"The informant who has long resided at Flushing and been lately imprisoned by the French is willing to give every account of the Place, and to Pilot any ships that might be sent against it through either the fore or back passage round the Island and moreover can give information where every Gun and Mortar is placed round it.

(*Endorsed*) "Intelligence dated 'Antelope' Yarm^th^ Roads 26^th^ January 1804."

Of about the same date is a Memoir written by an English spy in Paris, named Sullivan.

D.

"FLAT BOTTOM BOATS.

"On the Island of the Seine, viz. from the *Pont de Révolution* to the full extent of that place, between *Four* and *Five hundred Boats* are in preparation, Two on each Stocks, which by this time (*from the great efforts*) must be entirely finished.

"DESCRIPTION.

"The above Boats it is supposed will draw from 2 feet 9 inches to 3 feet 9 inches when the detachments are therein. The number of such according to report are from 130 to 150 *Rank* and *file*. The Boats are of course of two sizes. The one apparently about 36 feet long by 14 or 15 feet wide, the other 46 feet long by 16 or 18 feet wide, and they are to be provided with 12 *or more Paddles*, one half forward, the other Aft, for the purpose of a general Dash under the Guns of the several Batteries of the intended places of Invasion, or to advance or retreat as occasion may require. The small Boats are intended for this object and the larger for the disembarkation. The Boats are about 3/5^{ths} of the length flat, they then swell out into a *Curve* rising from the keel about 8 feet, within which are rows of seats across for the purposes of seating the men; to prevent them being seen; and to protect them from distant small shot, they rising from Two Benches at a time to fire as occasion may require, viz. either front, rear, obliquely right or left, and also two deep the whole length of the Boats Larboard and Starboard sides, in short the whole forms one solid Column, and they seat themselves to reload. Please to observe that from the seat upwards the sides of the Boat are only of Inch deal Boards nailed to the Ribs, and that the Heigth (*sic*) from the seat is about 3 feet 10 inches. The Invading Army are to be provided with Six days' Provisions of Bread and Wine, some of the Boats are to carry light Artillery to be disembarked and drawn by Men; It is generally understood that between the 15th and 21st of October (*if the weather should permit, by being foggy and a smooth sea*) the intended Invasion will be carried into Effect, on *several points at the same time*, and that the Boats in preparation on the Seine and other navigable

Rivers adjoining, will prior to the above period drop down to *Le Havre;* part of the Boats it is said will endeavour to make Cherbourg, as all the Seamen are enrolled for that purpose, some of whom having been neighbours are personally known to the writer and who since their arrival at the described places have written to their relations which letters the informant has perused. A second Division preparing at St. Maloes and Grandville is for the purpose of attacking *Jersey*, *Alderney*, and *Guernsey*, one or all of which they are confident *will fall*, and which is intended to save in some measure the honor of the First Consul should he fail in his Attack against *England* and *Ireland*. The great force now at and assembling at Caen, St. Maloes, and Cherbourg leaves the matter beyond a doubt, more so as the Boats being of a light construction may be easily conveyed in case of necessity *by land* to the several places of destination *if prevented by sea;* N.B. the Gun Boats are to act with the above. The remaining Divisions of the Boats built on the Seine, &c., it is understood are to act with those building Eastward thereof, as far as *Dunkirk*, for the purpose of attacking England and from the general opinion will be the nearest parts of our Coast from those places; the *Naval* preparations at *Brest*, &c., report says are intended for Ireland.

"There is very great discontent in Paris on account of the *Flower* of the French Army and some of its *best Generals* having been sent to *St. Domingo*, where report says near *One hundred Thousand* have been nearly lost, and that the Army designed to attack England consists of too great a number of Conscripts (raw recruits) notwithstanding which the greatest part of the multitude are sure of success, while the better informed think entirely to the contrary, and that the whole of the monies subscribed from the different Departments for the Armament will be entirely lost; be this as it may every time that an attack is made on their fishing vessels or on their Harbours with success, the People of Paris in general are drove to despair, fearful of the want of the first necessaries of life, similar to those of the late War.

"The French Government it is said did propose through the mediation of Russia and Prussia a *Traité* with England for 21 *years at least*, which gave much satisfaction, as they observed it would be more permanent than a Peace.

"The general Hatred against all the English at this moment is beyond description; with the exception of such who are employed in manufactories, or in the confidence of Government, and who mount the National Cockade; all these have a card of security and a Guard to protect them and their property. The above was repeated[ly] offered to the Writer but refused."

(*Endorsed*) "Intelligence
"MR. SULLIVAN."

APPENDIX VI

THE FRENCH EAST INDIAN EXPEDITION AT THE CAPE IN 1803 [1]

IN searching the archives of our War Office (Intelligence, No. 425) I found the following letters, which have not been published in the official records of Cape Colony. The first two are from English residents at the Cape: the others are from the chiefs of the East Indian Expedition which the First Consul despatched early in 1803. At that time our Government restored the Cape to the Batavian Republic, in pursuance of the terms of the Treaty of Amiens; but after a long delay, occasioned by the almost complete rupture brought about by Bonaparte's high-handed intervention in Switzerland in the previous autumn, the position was again severely strained, when, early in 1803, Sébastiani's report on the state of Egypt and the Levant was published in the "Moniteur." That this action was more than mere bluster is evident from the very important secret instructions issued by the First Consul to his General of Division, Decaen, whom he appointed to be "Capitaine-Général des Etablissemens français au delà du Cap de Bonne-Espérance." They were dated 11 nivôse an XI. [Jan. 1, 1803], and have been printed in full by M. Dumas in the "Précis des Evénemens Militaires" (vol. xi., pp. 185-90), and in the "Revue Historique" of 1879 and of 1881. But the following extracts are here cited in order to explain the importance which Bonaparte

[1] Reprinted from "The English Historical Review" for January, 1900.

and his officers then attached to the possession of the Cape. I may add that Decaen was noted for his furious hostility to England; while Admiral Linois was soon to be the scourge of British commerce in the eastern seas.

"Pour nourrir la guerre aux Indes plusieurs campagnes, il faut raisonner dans l'hypothèse que nous ne serions pas maîtres des mers, et que nous aurions à espérer peu de secours considérables.

"Il paraîtrait difficile qu'avec un corps d'armée on pût longtemps résister aux forces considérables que peuvent opposer les Anglais, sans alliances et sans une place servant de point d'appui, où dans un cas extrême on pût capituler et se trouver encore maître de se faire transporter en France ou à l'Ile de France avec armes et bagages, sans être prisonniers, et sans compromettre l'honneur et un corps considérable de Français.

"Un point d'appui doit avoir le caractère d'être fortifié, et d'avoir une rade ou un port où des frégates ou des vaisseaux de commerce soient à l'abri d'une force supérieure. Quelle que soit la nation à laquelle appartienne cette place, portugaise, hollandaise ou anglaise, le premier objet paraît devoir tendre à s'en emparer dès les premiers mois, en calculant sur l'effet de l'arrivée d'une force européenne inattendue et incalculée. . . .

"Si la guerre venait à se declarer entre la France et l'Angleterre avant le 1er vendémiaire an xiii [Sept. 22, 1804] et que le capitaine-général en fût prévenu avant de recevoir les ordres du gouvernement, il a carte blanche, est autorisé à se reployer sur l'Ile de France et le Cap, ou à rester dans la presqu' île [de l'Inde] selon les circonstances où il se trouvera, et les espérances qu'il pouvrait concevoir. . . .

"On ne conçoit pas aujourd'hui que nous puissions avoir la guerre avec l'Angleterre sans y entraîner la Hollande. Un des premiers soins du capitaine-général sera de s'assurer de la situation des établissemens hollandais, portugais, espagnols, et des ressources qu'ils pourraient offrir.

"La mission du capitaine-général est d'abord une mission d'observation sous les rapports politique et militaire, avec le peu de forces qu'il mène, et une occupation de comptoirs

pour notre commerce; mais le premier Consul, bien instruit par lui, et par l'exécution ponctuelle des instructions qui précèdent, pourra peut-être le mettre à même d'acquérir un jour la grande gloire qui prolonge la mémoire des hommes au-delà de la durée des siècles."

Extracts from letters from Cape Town:

"11 April, 1803.

"This morning 45 of the Batavian horse soldiers were carried from the Barracks to the cells in the Castle, having mutinied and dangerously wounded two of their officers: this is a bad beginning, and worse, I fear, will follow. Every inhabitant seems dissatisfied with the proceedings of Government, and I make no doubt that was (*sic*) an English fleet to appear off the Cape, three parts out of four would immediately join them: the troops are all murmuring, and daily complaints (*sic*) of bad food and that in such small quantities that it is scarcely sufficient for them to exist with, and their pay is exceedingly trifling. Heaven only knows how it will end: the Commissary General has modestly made known to the Inhabitants they must make up their minds to feed, cloath (*sic*), and pay every expence of the army and navy, the Batavian Republic not having it in their power to support them: the monied men are all preparing for evacuating the Colony."

"Cape Town, May 14, 1803.

"There are three French frigates and a Seventy-four arrived in Simon's Bay with a General and Troops for the Cape; the Dutch say, for Pondicherry; but there seems to be only one opinion about that; everything is ordered for them in the name of the Batavian Republic. I am affraid all is not yet understood in Europe, for one of the Frigates on making the inner bay, stood off again, on not seeing the Dutch colours, which by some means had been neglected to be hoisted, and made a private signal from the outer bay to the hill, which on being answered, she stood up into Simon's Bay: however, all is quiet, and it never required any gift of prophecy to fortel that this would be the case."

[*Copie.*] "Du Cap de Bonne Espérance.

"False Bay le 30 Floréal, an XI.
[20 Mai, 1803.]

"au Ministre de la Marine.

[After describing his wound, etc., he refers to the fortifications at Cape Town, of which he says] "les Anglais n'en ont point augmenté. . . . Ils ont eu dans cette Colonie jusqu'a 4820 hommes dont ils ont fait passer graduellement la plus grande partie dans l'Inde. Ce qui est à observer c'est qu'ils ont expédié le 61e Régiment, composé de 850 hommes, pour la Mer Rouge à l'époque de 20 Avril 1801 sous les ordres de Sir Home Popham.[1] Je n'entrerai pas dans d'autres détails, persuadé que le Général De Caen ne vous laisse rien ignorer de ce qui concerne cette Colonie, et de la conduite qu'y ont tenue les Anglais. Il en résulte, en dernière analyse, qu'ils y ont laissé une grande influence par les guinées qu'ils y ont répandues. Tout y est doublé de prix depuis leur séjour. Il me paroît, par les renseignements que je me suis procurés, qu'ils y ont beaucoup de Partisans. L'importance de cette Colonie ne peut manquer de fixer l'attention de notre Gouvernement éclairé.

"Je serai fort exact à vous transmettre après mon arrivée dans l'Inde la situation actuelle des Anglois. Je serai bientôt au fait, par mes anciennes relations répandues dans tous les points du Continent de tout ce qui les concerne. . . .

"Salut et Respect,

"MONTIGNY."

[*Copie.*]

"A bord du Marengo, en rade à Simon's Baye.

"le 1er Prairial, an XI. [21 Mai, 1803.]

"Au Ministre de la Marine,

"J'ai eu l'honneur de vous rendre compte par mes précédentes dépêches, qu'après une heureuse traversée de 63 jours, j'avois mouillé le $\frac{29 \text{ Floréal}}{9 \text{ Mai}}$ à Simon's Baye dans la Baie de False (*sic*), avec la fregatte La Sémillante. J'y ai trouvé l'Atalanta, arrivée depuis deux jours. La Belle Poule, transportant le Préfet Colonial Léger, et qui j'avois expediée

[1] It took part in Hutchinson's operations against the French in Cairo, etc.

en avant de la hauteur de Madère, n'a point paru en cette Baye, et je ne doute pas que des vents forcé du N. O. l'ayant empêché d'attrapper le mouillage, le Cap^ne^ Bruillac se sera determiné à passer outre, se proposant la relâche de Madagascar, pour y renouveller son eau, attendu que je lui ai defendu impérativement la relâche de l'Ile de France dans les instructions que je lui ai données. Quant aux transports, la Côte d'Or et la Marie Françoise, dont nous avons été separés la nuit du départ, par suite du coup de vent que nous avons essuyé, je lui suppose encore à l'arrière. Mon eau étant faite, je pars demain, si le vent est favorable pour me rendre à ma destination. Harmonie, joie, et santé règnent parmi les equipages et passagers de la division. L'accueil le plus prévenant et le plus obligeant nous a été fait ici par les autorités bataves: je me réfère au surplus aux détails renfermés dans ma précédente dépêche.

(*Signé*) "LINOIS."

"P.S. J'ouvre ma lettre, général ministre, pour vous annoncer l'arrivée en cette baye du transport le Côte d'Or, qui a relâché assez inutilement aux Canaries. Il n'y a point de malade à son bord. Je ne l'attendrai pas pour appareiller, si les vents deviennent favorables pour mon départ. Cette lettre doit vous parvenir par le vaisseau anglois Cambrian, Cap^ne^ Gordon, allant à Londres; c'est un bâtiment de commerce."

[Pencilled on back, received Jan. 29, 1804.]

The letter of General Decaen is of similar tenour. It is clear that these letters were taken direct to our War Office by Captain Gordon when he found that war had broken out. But the fact that the French officers entrusted letters to our East Indiamen shows that when they left Brest (March 1, 1803) the approach of war was not considered imminent. Napoleon evidently considered that two and a half years would be needed for the completion of his preparations for the overthrow of our Indian power; and the letter of Captain Montigny shows that the French took every care to examine the fortifications at the Cape, which

Decaen's secret instructions warned him to secure as a necessary *point d'appui*. Is it too much to presume that the despatch of this expedition, under the command of a pronounced Anglophobe, decided our Government to thwart Napoleon's plans by an immediate declaration of war? That our Government thenceforth attached the greatest importance to the acquisition of the Cape is clear from our Foreign Office Records. In Prussia, No. 70, there is a draft of a proposed treaty with that Power, dated Oct. 27, 1805, the third article of which stipulates that, at the end of the present war against Napoleon, no question should be raised by our allies as to the retention by Great Britain of Malta and of the Cape of Good Hope. I believe that that is the earliest indication of the fixed determination of Pitt to re-conquer and to keep that colony, the importance of which had been so unmistakably pointed out by Decaen's expedition.

[That Napoleon adhered to his plans for seizing the Cape is clear from several of his later letters; as late as March 8, 1811, he named to Admiral Decrès an expedition to that point of vantage as one of the schemes that might well be undertaken in the years 1812-1813.]

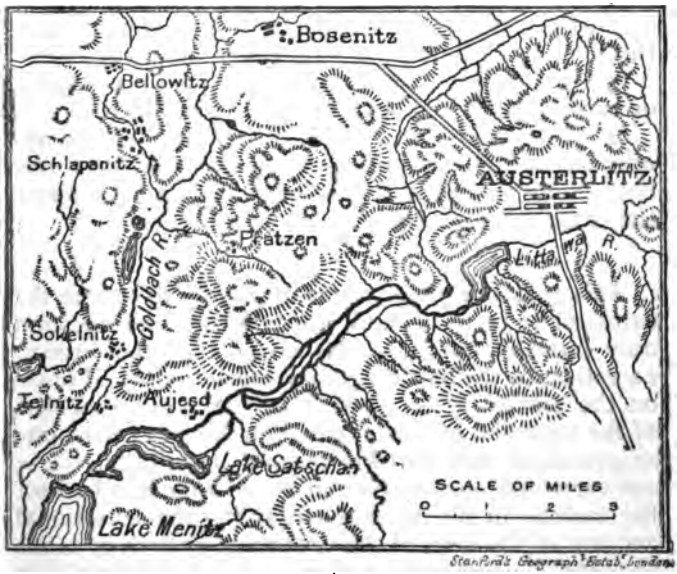
APPENDIX VII

THE ICE INCIDENT AT THE BATTLE OF AUSTERLITZ[1]

THERE is perhaps no incident in the history of modern warfare in which the evidence of bulletins and memoirs has been so long accepted as conclusive (only to meet with denial from those who have investigated the local evidence) as the alleged engulfing of some thousands of Russians in the lakes, or large ponds, of Satschan and Mönitz. In the "Spectator" for March 15th, 1902, I maintained that all the ordinary French sources on which the historian relies agree as to the reality of the catastrophe to some thousands of Russians on their left wing; and another writer pointed out that the Czar Alexander is reported in the recently published memoirs of Count Chambonas to have asserted at Vienna in 1814 that 20,000 Russians did actually so perish. When the Czar himself confirmed the evidence supplied by Napoleon's bulletin, and by a dozen or more of French memoirs, including the dramatic and pictorial touches added by Ségur and Marbot, and the far simpler and more convincing narrative of Lejeune, it appeared unreasonable to refuse credence to the story. Wishing, however, to learn whether the local evidence was consistent with it, I wrote to Professor Fournier, of Vienna, and he has been good enough to furnish me with the following facts, which seem to prove the incident to be enormously exaggerated.

[1] Reprinted from the "English Historical Review" for July, 1902.

(1.) The facts as described by the official papers and the written testimony of the local *Oberamtmann*, Franz Brutmann, and of the *Pfarrer* of the neighbouring village of Telnitz, prove that the ice on those ponds on December 2nd, 1805 was comparatively thin, so that the fugitives, when driven back in that direction, would naturally skirt the lower part of the Satschan pond



and make for the dam which separates it from the Mönitz lake. It is allowed by Ségur that 2,000 did escape through this gap; but the local evidence shows that his story of the icy mirror becoming suddenly black with thousands of fugitives who were thereupon engulfed is at least a gross exaggeration.

(2.) On Napoleon's own order to the overseer (*Fischmeister*) the lakes were drained within a very few days; and all that was found was twenty-eight or thirty

cannon, 150 corpses of horses, but only two (some say three) human corpses. These were all found in marshy corners of the Satschan lake, over which they had evidently tried to rush, and the fact that all the men but two had escaped seems to show that the infantry either skirted the lake or got safely across, and that the two (or three) men who perished were drivers or gunners, who were entangled with the harness or were hit by the cannon-shot which the French poured upon this spot, and which were afterwards found there.

(3.) In the Mönitz pond not a single cannon or wagon, or corpse, whether of man or horse, was found.

(4.) The two ponds have long been drained and are now arable land; but no bones or weapons have ever been found there, though these are often turned up on the other parts of the battlefield.

This evidence, then, seems decisively to reduce the catastrophe to very small proportions. The question only remains how it comes about that the French narratives of the battle, with few exceptions (and those on the part of generals who were on a different part of the long line of battle), insist on the ice catastrophe as grandiose and horrible beyond description. The answer would seem to be that when Napoleon had set the fashion in his bulletin containing the sensational account of the cries of the drowning, French generals thought it incumbent on them to fill in the details in in an equally picturesque manner. And so the two men, the hundred and fifty horses, and thirty cannon ultimately developed into Marbot's "thousands of Russians, with their horses, guns, and wagons, slowly settling down into the depths."

But how came the Czar to add his quota to the tale of victims? Here again it is clear that what Napoleon wrote, in the first instance, apparently in order to provide a welcome sensation for the Parisians in that

gloomy winter marked by a financial crisis and general discontent, proved to be an equally serviceable version for the Czar. It enabled him to explain the precipitate flight of his army and his abandonment of the Austrians by a reference to natural causes. Indeed the "lakes of Telnitz" played the same part in the ordinary Russian account of the campaign of 1805 as the "flames of Moscow" and the "snows of an exceptionally early winter" played in the Napoleonic version of the campaign of 1812.

APPENDIX VIII

AN INTERCEPTED FRENCH DESPATCH

WHILE searching in the British Official Records (Foreign Office, France, No. 77), I found the original of Champagny's despatch of December 11th, 1808, written at Paris to the Emperor Napoleon, who was then in Spain. How it came into the hands of Sir John Moore, the British Commander in the North of Spain, is shown in his despatch[1] to Lord Castlereagh, dated Benavente, December 28th, 1808.

"MY LORD,

"I have the honour to enclose some letters contained in a bag lately intercepted, the courier murdered, going from France to Buonaparte. Those I enclose were all that I thought in the least interesting. That from Champigni (*sic*) you will think particularly so. I have the honour, etc

"JOHN MOORE."

On December 16th, 1808 Moore had written to Castlereagh stating that some peasants had murdered a French officer between Segovia and Valladolid, and had brought his despatches (including one from Berthier to Soult) to the British outposts. I have not found a copy of this last letter; but the one which I now publish was evidently gained in the same way. Spanish peasants murdered the courier, and then

[1] "A narrative of the campaign of the British Army in Spain commanded by Sir John Moore"; edited by James Moore (London, 1809). Appendix, p. 126.

brought his despatches to the British army, which was then beginning its retreat towards Benavente and Astorga. It seems probable that the murder of the courier bearing this despatch caused Napoleon to write the letter (No. 14604), dated Madrid, December 21st 1808, bidding Berthier to order the French officer commanding at Aranda to patrol the road, placing thirty horsemen at every *relais de poste*, and to inform the villagers that he (Napoleon) would burn the first village where a courier was stopped.

I omit one part of Champagny's letter which is of no interest.

"11 Décembre, 1808.

"SIRE,

"La correspondance de ce jour ne me fournit aucune lettre à mettre sous les yeux de Votre Majesté.

"M. de Romanzoff m'a entretenu des dépêches qu'il a reçues de St. Pétersbourg dans la journée d'hier. L'Empereur, son maître, a eu la bonté de lui écrire, sur les affaires de son département, une lettre de 4 pages qui le remet tout-à-fait au courant; avant de l'avoir reçue, il se croyait à peine ministre des affaires étrangères; car il n'entendoit plus parler de rien; il a eu la bonté de m'en faire l'analyse; la voicy.

"L'Empereur de Russie parle du succès qu'il vient d'obtenir en Finlande; cependant il n'est que médiocrement content du Général Buxhowden, et il se propose de le remplacer. . . La réponse du gouvernement anglais lui (*i.e.* du Czar) ôte presque toute espérance d'une paix prochaine. Cependant il pense qu'il importe de tenir toujours une porte ouverte à la négociation, et ensuite, quelqu'en soit les suites, de *marcher en avant*. C'est ce dont il donne un exemple par sa réponse au Prince Kourakin, qui lui avoit rendu compte du peu de suite qu'il avoit obtenu en demandant à la Cour de Vienne la reconnaissance du roi Joseph. M. de Romansoff m'a fait lire cette lettre de l'Empereur au prince Kourakin: je crois que Votre Majesté en seroit satisfaite. L'Empereur de Russe s'étonne du refus de l'Autriche et du pretexte sur lequel elle l'appuye: elle veut auparavant connoître le résultat des conférences d'Erfurth: 'Est-ce en désobligeant (a dit

l'Empereur), qu'elle prétend mériter de la complaisance? Pourquoi s'inquiète-t-elle de ce qui a été signé à Erfurth? Loin d'avoir voulu blesser les intérêts de l'Autriche, on y a stipulé au contraire l'intégrité de cette monarchie'—cette assertion est evidemment une erreur de l'Empereur qui n'avoit pas le traité sous les yeux, erreur probablement occasionnée par le souvenir de quelque entretiens avec Votre Majesté—'Ainsi pendant que je m'occupois de ses intérêts,' (continue l'Empereur) 'elle repondait par un refus à la démarche que je faisois faire auprès d'elle, or en faisant semblant de rechercher mon amitié, elle me témoigne de la méfiance sur ma conduite à Erfurth.'—L'Empereur accuse l'Autriche de contradiction dans toute sa conduite et dans la langage de M. de Metternich, de M. de Stadion, de M. de Vincent: il dit que la reconnaissance qu'on lui demandoit n'étoit que l'effet du ménagement qu'on vouloit avoir pour elle, en se dispensant ainsi de réclamer une déclaration catégorique sur le prodigieux accroissement de ses forces militaires; il ne voit pas quel est le but où elle marche, et après avoir observé que, lorsque le roi Joseph sera à Madrid, le refus de l'Autriche de le reconnoître ne sera qu'une acte ridicule; il déclare que, si elle avoit formé le projet insensé d'ourdir une nouvelle coalition en se liguant avec l'Angleterre, la Turquie, et les insurgés d'Espagne, il étoit en mesure de s'y opposer, et qu', uni avec l'Empereur Napoléon, il écraseroit facilement cette ligue nouvelle, qui seroit pour l'Autriche une cause de désastres, si ce n'est d'une ruine entière.

"Telle est la réponse de l'Empereur Alexandre au Prince Kourakin: elle a dû parvenir au chargé d'affaires de Russie à Vienne qui a ordre de la communiquer à M. de Stadion; ce chargé d'affaires a écrit récemment au Prince Kourakin; il paraît que cette dépêche de l'Empereur ne lui étoit pas encore parvenu, cependant elle est datée du 8 Novembre.

"J'aurais désiré que M. de Romansoff m'en laissât une copie: mais bientôt j'ai vu qu'il désiroit la présenter lui-même à Votre Majesté et qu'il espéroit Son prochain retour. Cette espérance est trop douce pour tout français et aussi pour M. de Romansoff qui respecte et admire Votre Majesté presqu'autant qu'un francais, pour que je me permisse. d'affoiblir cette espérance, que j'aime partager avec lui-Mais si elle ne devoit pas être bientôt réalisée, je renou

vellerais à Votre Majesté la demande d'aller La rejoindre, si d'après la réponse attendu d'Angleterre, mon séjour icy lui paroissoit inutile.

"Je suis, &c.,
"CHAMPAGNY."

The interest of this despatch lies chiefly in the proof which it affords of the sincerity of the desire of the Emperor Alexander to live at peace with Great Britain, and of his belief that the joint note which the two Emperors sent from Erfurt to London might lead to that result. Whether Napoleon cherished the same hopes and desires may well be doubted, if we look at the tenour of the reply, which on November 19th he ordered Champagny to send to the British Government; but the Russian Emperor undoubtedly believed that the Erfurt Note would lead to peace. Other points of interest in this letter are the subordinate position in which Alexander kept his Minister at Paris; the annoyance which as early as the end of November he felt at Austria's attitude; and the belief of Champagny that his master might soon return to Paris. This was before the news from Vienna became serious, and before the reports about the Fouché-Talleyrand alliance became exasperating.

APPENDIX IX

NAPOLEON'S LAST PAPERS[1]

EXTRACTS from a despatch of Major Gorrequer from St. Helena, dated May 14th, 1821 (nine days after the death of Napoleon) to Lord Bathurst, describing an interview with Counts Bertrand and Montholon at Longwood.

". . . Having begged Count Montholon he would show me in the first instance those [papers] which he considered to belong to General Bonaparte himself, he went into his room and brought out a bundle with him. They were principally notes on the Concordat, a rough copy of the letters from the Cape of Good Hope, published as a reply to the book of Mr. Warden, an answer to the 'Manuscrit de Ste. Hélène,' and various loose papers which it would have required an immense time, from the indistinct manner in which many of them were written, simply in pencil, to have deciphered. The heads and subjects of none of them appeared to relate to any object of paramount interest, and upon asking Count Montholon whether nothing more existed he said that I might consider all papers of any kind of consequence as having been already transmitted in one way or another to Europe. He added, *Vous en avez même vu de publiés*, referring to the ninth book of the 'Mémoires.' They had advertised (he said) the publication of the seventh, eighth, and tenth books, but they had not appeared: these had been sent to Mr. O'Meara, but not for publication. He had published what he did without any authority, and they were extremely angry with him for it. He (Count Montholon) would compel Mr. O'Meara to surrender up to him the remainder of the

[1] Reprinted in part from the "English Historical Review" of April, 1902.

manuscript he had in his possession. General Bonaparte, he said, had been extremely surprised and incensed at the publication of any part of them, as well as of the account of the battle of Waterloo by General Gourgaud, who was desired to deliver up the notes he was possessed of upon that subject previous to his departure from hence; and though he had given up one copy, he had retained, or rather had purloined, the other: that this circumstance had irritated General Bonaparte against General Gourgaud more than anything else in his conduct, and he had never forgiven it.

"I asked Count Montholon what had become of the first books of the 'Mémoires.' He said they had been sent home, but he did not mention to whom. He reiterated that every paper which might be considered of any consequence had been sent to Europe a long time since; that General Bonaparte had dictated nothing of any interest since July or August last.

[On the next day, at Sir H. Lowe's request, the papers were arranged, and, as well as the rooms of Longwood, were submitted to inspection of the officers of the garrison. On 12 May Bertrand and Montholon described some of the works begun but not finished by Napoleon.]

"... a collection of materials for a work in progress on the Archduke Charles's campaigns, which, when he saw that published by the archduke himself, Count Bertrand said, he threw aside, saying, *Mais je n'ai écrit que des bêtises ici; je travaillais en supposant que l'ennemi avait* 80,000 *ou* 100,000 *hommes, et je trouve qu'il n'en avoit qu'environ cinquante mille.* He had in this manner relinquished several works in contemplation, and others even begun, in consequence of the want of books from which he might have obtained the information which he found necessary as a ground-work to proceed upon—such, for instance, as the strength of armies, their exact positions at particular times, etc. *Ceci l'avait beaucoup dégoûté de ces ouvrages, parce qu'il n'avoit que sa tête pour travailler—et cela ne lui suffisoit point.*[1] A great many papers

1 This fact shows the need of great caution in accepting Napoleon's 'dictées' on military matters to Montholon. He had to rely on his memory, on the books of his library (2,700 in

were on the Egyptian campaign. Bertrand mentioned that he had particularly urged him to write on the Russian campaign, and that in Saxony, as there was no individual sufficiently acquainted with his plans and objects (during the latter campaign in particular) to write a good account of them, no one but himself being able to explain his dispositions, the multitude of combinations which were put in action, nor the object of many of them. He would not, however, undertake it, but replied they would speak for themselves. The most bulky parcel of papers which Count Bertrand opened was, he said, on the defensive operations of a division by field works and the depth of the formations of troops. The French always formed their line three deep, but, as the rear rank could not fire over the two others in its front, he most approved the English plan of forming two deep only, so long as you could not give effect to the fire of the third rank. This point, Count Bertrand said, had occupied his mind with a particular degree of intenseness. He would get up several times in the middle of the night to write notes upon it, and he frequently sent billets to Count Bertrand on the subject even at night. The whole of that parcel of papers had been prepared during the time he was busied in making his little garden. He there traced out all his plans and field works on the ground, having them all (his followers) about him, and pointing out to them his ideas. He there described the mode in which he could give effect to the fire of a line drawn up in ranks even as far as ten deep, by placing the ranks on advantageous inclined positions, or drawing them up with the men of lowest stature in front rank and the tallest in the rear. With his ranks eight or ten deep he thought himself perfectly *inabordable*, and he would hear of no objection to his plans. He would even propose, when the ground did not offer a slope, to make the men dig away a little of the earth,

number), on files of the "Times," and on French newspapers. This was an obviously insufficient basis on which to rear the history of complex campaigns. The British government has been blamed for not supplying Napoleon with the necessary facts. But these facts were buried deep in the archives of Paris, Vienna, Berlin, and St. Petersburg. On these governments lay the chief responsibility in this matter.

where they were to stand, like steps, which would give sufficient elevation to the rear ranks to fire over those in front, and this he would have done in a minute. When Count Bertrand asked for another minute he said, 'No: in war half a minute is too much to lose; you would have the cavalry upon you and be cut to pieces.' To prove the practicability of such depths of formation in the little garden he would call out, '*Allons, Noverraz, viens ici; tu es le plus grand, plante-toi là. Vous autres, approchez;*' and having arranged them according to size on a declivity he went on, '*Et moi, qui suis le plus petit, je serai au dernier rang;*' *puis il couchait en joue avec un bâton par-dessus nos têtes*, exclaiming in triumph, '*Eh bien, ne voyez-vous pas que je tire par-dessus la tête de Noverraz?*'

"Count Bertrand added that these papers were kept by him mostly from curiosity. There were, however, a number of interesting things among them, which he intended to put in order, as they would be useful to his sons."

As far as I know, these details have never been fully made known. It is clear from the above account that Bertrand rather than Montholon was the confidant of the ex-emperor in these interesting tactical experiments, which were carried on apparently in the early part of 1820. At that time the British officer on duty reported (Feb. 1st, 1820), "I saw General Bonaparte to-day often at his favourite amusement, viz. gardening. He was himself employed placing sods on a bank. In short, his sole amusement at present seems to be building sod walls, making reservoirs to hold water, etc., and pulling down to-day that which he had reared the day before."[1]

In view of Bertrand's statement to Gorrequer, cited above, we may doubt whether this piling up of sods had anything to do with gardening, and whether the construction of "reservoirs" was not really the heaping

[1] Forsyth, "The Captivity of Napoleon at St. Helena," vol. iii. p. 210.

up of banks to show how a squad of infantry might be arranged so as to double its gun power.

The reference to the campaign of 1813 is also curious. I have always considered the latter half of the Saxon campaign to be the most defective of all the great captain's enterprises; and his refusal to enter into any explanation respecting his plans at that time seems to show that he himself was aware that they were faulty. On none other of his campaigns was he so reticent as on that of 1813.

APPENDIX X

LETTERS OF MAJOR GORREQUER FROM ST. HELENA

MAJOR GORREQUER, as is well known, was well placed for hearing news about Napoleon and his household at Longwood, in St. Helena. The following letters have not been published before. In the former of them, after referring to family matters, the Major proceeds:

"ST. HELENA,
"October 8th, 1816.

". . . . This is a very queer place, I assure you; it is the *vice-versa* of all others. All the verdure and cultivated parts are at the summit of immense mountains—the lower regions resembling cast iron more than anything else; it blows continually in the same direction, and is always raining; the shores of the Island are frightful precipices without any beach. Bonaparte calls it the Island of Desolation, and says (with truth) that it is the driest and at the same time the wettest country in the universe. Every article which you have to buy is at an unconscionable rate; the inhabitants are no society; but notwithstanding all these disadvantages you may find some resources. We have balls where we find some pretty yarnstock girls, horse-racing, cricket, and an amateur theatre is on the eve of being opened. There are some very pretty little country residences among the Highlands, and the roads, though up and down and zig-zag, are pretty good. The Governor's country house (where I stay with him) would be a pretty place, even in England, as well as the grounds about it, which are very tastefully laid out.

"Old Bony has been in sad humour for some time past; he sees nobody; he has had some very warm conferences with the Governor which have ended in a complete rup-

ture, and they are on worse terms now than he was with Sir George Cockburn. We are going to send away four of his followers, and to put the rest under greater restraint, which will make Nap. much worse; he has grown as fat as a butcher, with a great jowl hanging from his chin. I have my share of trouble with the crew, as I audit their accounts, and am often despatched upon disagreeable missions to them, which never end pleasantly. I do not like to communicate much to you about these folk, for fear of accidents, for if I was found out, I should certainly find myself in no trifling scrape.

[The rest of the letter is on private matters.]

(Signed) "G. GORREQUER.

"Lieut.-Colonel Fergusson,
"Late 3rd Foot,
"Royal Military College."

The first part of the following letter deals with private affairs. It then continues:

"ST. HELENA
"October 31st, 1817.

". . . The last Brevet is a very shabby concern, and I never expect to arrive at the rank of Lieut.-Colonel, notwithstanding the cursed quill-driving employment I am at from morning to night, and which has worn down my fingers to an inch stump. . . .

"I have not seen old Bony since last July was a twelvemonth; that is to say, to speak to him, in consequence of his dislike to our Chief; I have merely seen him casually in his garden; he is very cross and I do not think will be otherwise whilst the present authorities continue here; he has of late gone out a little now and then, not beyond the distance of a couple of hundred yards from his house, however, which he had not done for months before, determined to brave all the consequences of confinement and want of exercise, rather than walk or ride out, whilst the restrictions he complained of remain in force. This perseverance of his at length brought on symptoms of illness which caused some

anxiety about him; his liver was supposed to be affected, his legs were swollen, and some apprehension of dropsy was also entertained; this and the strong recommendation of his medical adviser induced him to take the air a few times as above mentioned. Propositions were made on his side and demands put forth for the re-establishment of his former regulations as fixed by Sir George Cockburn, which not having been all conceded, rather than accept them in part, he has returned to his determination of not stirring out until he obtains what he asks, which if he really persists in, his constitution will not stand it out many years more; it is impossible that a person of his corpulence and former habits of active bodily exercise can avoid contracting some dangerous disorder by persevering in such a mode of living, with great application besides to reading and writing, not only in the day time but also frequently for a great portion of the night.

"We had some smart shocks of an earthquake here last month in the night. Old Nap. thought at the first moment it was the effect of explosion, either of the Admiral's ship in the Bay, or of some Powder Magazine.

"Notwithstanding the remote situation of this island and its many disadvantages, a man may still make himself comfortable, and I might be so if it was not for the incessant labor I have at the pen; for besides my aide-de-campship the duties of military secretary I also perform, and there being no commissary of accounts, I have the fag of the examination of military accounts, and of all the accounts of Bony's establishment; the whole of these duties I have had saddled upon me ever since our arrival here and without adequate pay or the prospect of the advantage by promotion or otherwise; so you may judge whether this is a happy or enviable berth, which does not leave me an hour's relaxation during the day one with another; how glad I shall be when I turn my back upon it.

"We have races twice a year; our turf meetings would, I am convinced, not a little surprise you, and our amateur theatre boasts of some very good performers. The House, decorations, scenery, dresses, and the good looks of the female part of the audience would shame many of the large towns in England, and the girls here are great dancers, which

is another of our amusements and closes the list, having given you the whole.

"Old Nap. had the Bust of his son in marble brought to him some time back from England; it was made at Leghorn, and is considered a strong resemblance; in which case he must be a very good-looking boy. This delighted the old fellow much, but he is now a good deal distressed at the measures of exclusion to (*sic*) the Principality of Parma and Placentia adopted against this boy, by the Allied Powers, and I believe also feels very sensibly the steps taken in Europe to prevent the departure of Lucien for America, which may eventually mar some of [the] plots of the trans-atlantic Bonapartists.

"Do not quote me in anything mentioned herein about Nap., for it would have the most evil consequences towards me if I was known to say a word of him—we are devilish mum here I assure you.

"Have stolen an hour or two from my night's rest to scrawl you out this in my bed room as I have not time in the day, and as it is now late and you cannot afford to be bothered any longer, I shall consign you over to God's holy keeping.

"Believe me ever faithfully yours,

"YOU KNOW WHO.

"Lieut.-Colonel Fergusson,
half pay, 3rd Foot."

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